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ABSTRACT

In an effort to alleviate or minimize the more serious effects of declining enrollment in Ontario, this report provides relevant data, case studies, and guidelines regarding the use of school facilities. Many school boards in the province have already established practices relevant to the issue of redundant school facilities and consolidation, and 12 strategies are identified as commonly acceptable in confronting the problem of declining enrollment. Community requests for use of vacant school space are increasing and are contributing to a changing concept in which everyone, regardless of age or socioeconomic stratum, can benefit from involvement in the educational process in community education programs. The report recommends that each board generate a long-range master plan: develop policies dealing with surplus facilities, consolidation, and school closure: and fully explore priorities in and alternatives to phasing out schools. (Author/WD)

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Information Bulletin No. 1

SCHOOL FACILITIES, THE COMMUNITY, AND DECLINING ENROLMENT

A HANDBOOK OF SUGGESTIONS FOR ONTARIO BOARDS OF EDUCATION

The Commission on Declining School Enrolments in Ontario

February 15, 1978

Toronto, Ontario

EA 013 292

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

The Commission on Declining School Enrolments in Ontario (CODE)

Room N425, 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1V6 Telephone 964-2527
Commissioner, R. W. B. Jackson, Ph.D. Executive Secretary, H. B. Henderson

May 15th, 1978

Enclosed please find the corrected 1977 figures for the number of school closings in Ontario, to be inserted in pages 17 through 20 of the Commission's Information Bulletin #1. This set is to replace the one currently in circulation.

Yours sincerely,

H. Henderson.

Howard Henderson
Executive Secretary, CODE

INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 1

THE COMMISSION ON DECLINING SCHOOL ENROLMENTS IN ONTARIO

ERRATA (pp. 17-20)

CLOSINGS: SUMMARY OF DATA BY YEAR 1977

Public	17 53*
Secondary	0 1*
Separate	19 26*
Total	36 80*

*denotes annexation

TABLE 10

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLOSINGS IN ONTARIO

1970-1977

BOARD	1977
Brant County	3*
Durham County	1*
East York	-
East Parry Sound**	5*
Essex County	1-1*
Etobicoke	1
Fort Frances-Rainy River	1*
Frontenac County	1*
Grey County	-
Haldimand	-
Hamilton	2-5*
Hastings	-
Kent County	-
Lakehead	1*
Lanark County	1-1*
Lincoln County	2-4*
London	6*
Manitoulin	-
Muskoka	1*
Niagara South	2
North Shore	-
Northumberland & Newcastle	1-4*
Ottawa	-
Oxford	2*
Peterborough	1
Prince Edward County	1-1*
Renfrew County	3*
Sault Ste. Marie	1*
Scarborough	-
Simcoe County	1*
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	1
Sudbury	1-7*
Timiskaming	-
Toronto	1
Wentworth County	2*
Windsor	2
York Borough	-
York County	2*

*denotes annexation
**no annexations in 1976

TABLE 11

SECONDARY SCHOOL CLOSINGS IN ONTARIO

1970-1977

BOARD	1977
Frontenac County	-
Lambton County	-
Niagara South	-
Northumberland & Newcastle	-
Simcoe County	-
Timiskaming	1*

*denotes annexation

TABLE 12

SEPARATE SHOOL CLOSINGS IN ONTARIO

1970-1977

BOARD	1977
Brant County	3*
Carleton	1
Elgin County	3*
Essex County	1
Frontenac, Lennox & Addington	1-2*
Halton	1
Hamilton-Wentworth	2*
Lincoln County	1-1*
London & Middlesex	1*
Nipissing District	2
Oxford	1
Ottawa	9-2*
Peterborough, Victoria & New Castle	9*
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	1
Sudbury District	1
Windsor	2*
York Region	1*

*denotes annexation

Acknowledgements

This report on school facilities and community use of school space was researched and written as a direct consequence of the cooperation, helpfulness and commendable effort on the part of a number of individuals. I would like to express my appreciation to the many officials from the Ministry of Education who provided valuable information and assistance. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the contributions made by the following seven members of the School Facilities Task Force who supplied materials and gave of their time to present their comments, viewpoints and reactions to the draft report.

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I would like to thank Lorraine Lowe, Research Assistant, Etobicoke Board of Education, for her continued interest, and for the great care taken in reorganizing and transcribing my interview with the Etobicoke Board.

The task force has been well served in the preparation of this final report by its support staff. I extend my sincere appreciation to all of them, particularly to Jutta Keylwerth who did most of the research and writing, and who was largely responsible for the production of the report.

Howard B. Henderson
Chairman
Task Force on School Facilities
and the Community

DEC 1 9 1980

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SCHOOL FACILITIES AND THE COMMUNITY

A. INTRODUCTION

(i) Background to the Report

Province-wide enrolment declines began in 1971 when total elementary and secondary school enrolments peaked at 2,031,360 students. Elementary enrolment has been declining steadily since then at an alarming rate and will continue its downward trend for at least another decade; secondary school enrolment projections indicate that a peak will be reached provincially this year, followed by a significant decline that will last throughout the 1980's.

(ii) The Crunch is on in Our Schools

According to the latest Statistics Canada forecasts, this trend (of falling enrolment) will be with us for the next twenty years, a fact that was substantiated earlier in "The Myth of the Baby Boom".[1] Dwindling numbers of students in our schools -- similar to the situation existing in the United States and Europe -- must, therefore, be seen as a continuing trend rather than merely a passing phenomenon.

Addressing provincial education officials at the inaugural public meeting of CODE on October 14, 1977, Education Minister Thomas Wells stated that declining enrolment is a problem that "hasn't been faced squarely. Some felt it might go away before we had to deal with it." Most of us who have experienced a period of growth find it difficult to face the reality of the situation, and hope that the problem of declining enrolment will quietly fade into the 'blue yonder'. IT WON'T! On the contrary -- the simple fact is that it will intensify.

Nearly all boards in Ontario are now affected by these declines, although a large number of them either fail, or are just beginning, to realize the critical nature of this issue which so vitally concerns everyone. Perhaps if we were to refer not to decline, but to "managing change" instead, substituting "change managers" for school board personnel[2], the word "decline" would assume a less forbidding connotation. In looking at the positive side of enrolment decline while learning to adapt to it, B.J. Kipp, Director of Education for the Ottawa Separate School Board feels that "adaptation to decline is going to be a very important skill in the years ahead. If we are only adapted to growth, ... we are likely to make a tragic mess of decline. There is a strong case to be made for the argument that decline requires greater skill, better judgement, a stronger sense of community, and a higher order of leadership than growth does."[3]

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[1] Jackson, R.W.B., Working Paper (Halifax: The Atlantic Institute of Education, 1977).

Concrete guidelines and positive direction have been requested by Ontario's directors of education in helping boards deal with the problem effectively.

B. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The following report examines the effect of declining enrolments on school accommodation, such as twinning, leasing or selling of surplus or underused school buildings, the closing of schools, the disposal of school sites, the transportation of pupils to other schools, the community use of schools, and the impact of all these on the community. It aims at (1) alerting everyone in Ontario to the above-listed serious and far-reaching implications of declining enrolment trends, pointing out to school boards that they are, nearly without exception, all in the same boat and must learn to come to grips with -- and find their way out of -- this dilemma; (2) convincing school boards that viable alternatives must be identified, and humane as well as affordable long-term solutions found -- now; (3) assisting boards in appropriate policy-planning for the future -- now.

We realize that most of the solutions possible under existing legislation have been tried. The case studies selected for this manual, and many others not identified, exemplify what is being done. It is hoped that dissemination of this material will be of assistance in many areas.

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[2] As suggested by Alan Green, Director, Educational Facilities Laboratories (New York), in his address to CODE on October 14, 1977.

[3] "Report and Recommendations - Organization of English and French Language Schools, 1977 - 1978" (Preface), Ottawa Separate School Board, Ottawa.

C. FORMAT OF REPORT

The report is presented in 4 chapters. Chapter I, entitled Overall Provincial Data and Future Trends, is divided into two sections. Part 1 provides three sets of statistics: Tables 1 to 3 give statistics[4] on actual and projected change in public elementary school (Table 1), secondary school (Table 2), and R.C. separate school (Table 3) enrolment by counties, districts, and cities, 1971 - 1986. (Portables are included; kindergarten is not.)

Three graphs follow in Tables 4 to 6; they denote percentage change -- decline vs. increase -- in Ontario public school (Table 4), secondary school (Table 5), and R.C. separate school (Table 6) enrolment, 1976 - 1986. Tables 7 to 9 show enrolment and pupil-loading (capacity) figures in Ontario, 1976/1977, by board -- elementary (Table 7), secondary (Table 8), and R.C.S.S. (Table 9). (Kindergarten as well as portables are included.) The foregoing represents overall space statistics; part 2, overall site statistics, showing (a) the number of schools (elementary, secondary and R.C.S.S.) in Ontario that have been closed since 1970 -- up to July, 1977; and (b) the number of sites that have been sold in the province from 1970 to 1976, with the most frequently stated reasons.

Chapter II, Coping With Declining Enrolment, is divided into three sections. Eight Selected Case Studies, II(A), provides an in-depth report of the policies and/or guidelines already developed by seven sample boards in the province in order to establish criteria for such practices as school closure, the process of closure, transportation, community involvement and participation, and alternative use of surplus space -- both underused and vacant.

Boards were selected at random from materials received in this office before October 15, 1977. We regret that, owing to our very limited time-line, we were unable to incorporate additional boards in

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[4] Compiled for CODE by the Department of Educational Planning, OISE.

II(A) which, in our opinion, also produced thorough and comprehensive reports on this topic. (Included here are the Ottawa, Scarborough, London and Frontenac Boards of Education.) The following boards --named in alphabetical order -- are involved in our study: Etobicoke, Hamilton, Hastings County, Lakehead District, Lincoln County, Sault Ste. Marie District R.C.S.S. and Windsor. Attention will also be given to an excellent publication on enrolment trends by Wm. Keller et al., entitled Enrollment Trends: Programs for the Future. A Planning Guide for Districts with Declining Enrollments.[5]

Following this detailed analysis, brief mention is made of the way in which several other boards handle the question of facilities in a declining enrolment situation -- II(B).

In II(C) the common strands running through all the boards under observation are analysed. They provide a framework for discussion of the pros and cons associated with each practice or activity.

The third chapter looks at daytime and after-hour community use of vacant school space, and at community schools. Balmy Beach Community School, built just over 2 years ago, and funded jointly by the Board of Education for the City of Toronto and the Department of Parks and Recreation, serves as a main case study and as a model. Reference is made to other successful community schools. Additional examples of alternative (community) use are condensed from the two EFL (Educational Facilities Laboratories in the United States) booklets, and relevant material published by the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Parallel Use Committee (Toronto).

The chapter Community Use and the Community School is organized under these headings:

A. Community Use of Vacant School Space
B. The Community School
C. Ministry of Education Endorsements
D. Conclusion: Community Use, Community Schools, and Declining Enrolment

---

5 Keller, Wm. et al. (Albany: The State Education Department, The University of the State of New York, August, 1976).

Chapter IV, finally, lists guidelines and/or suggestions for the province (in general) and for the boards of education (in particular). Suggestions are divided into three categories:

A. Practices and Procedures
B. Alternative Uses
C. Recommended References

It is hoped that by establishing a set of guidelines for practices that could be implemented specifically in the area of school facilities, this report will succeed in alleviating and/or minimizing the more serious effects of declining enrolment on school boards in Ontario.

CHAPTER I

OVERALL PROVINCIAL DATA AND FUTURE TRENDS

A. SPACE STATISTICS

Introduction and Notes

The purpose of Tables 1 to 9 (pages 8 to 16) is twofold: (1) to supply Ontario boards of education with up-to-date information on actual and projected change in enrolments from 1976 to 1986, and (2) to initiate the process of determining surplus space as a basic step in assisting boards to meet the challenge. Clearly, awareness of the trends now should aid local boards in planning for the future.

The areas listed in the enrolment tables are synonymous with boards, with the exception of Metropolitan Toronto, the Niagara Region, and ten northern districts, each of which comprises several boards. These northern districts are: Algoma, Cochrane, Kenora, Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Rainy River, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, and Timiskaming. Enrolment data for northern isolate boards are not yet available. Two areas affected by recent changes in jurisdictional boundaries, Durham and Northumberland/Newcastle, are also without estimates, as population statistics are still inadequate.

Surplus space estimates may be calculated from two sets of data: (1) 1976 enrolment figures[6] substracted from (2) recently updated pupil-loading statistics (1977)[7]. The difference is then divided by an average occupancy rate of X pupils per class in the elementary panel and Y pupils per class in the secondary one. The exact occupancy rate will vary from board to board. We, therefore, advise boards to work out the number of surplus classrooms in their jurisdiction individually. It is our intention to alert school systems throughout the province to the fact that there is unused space; the question of how to handle it is left up to them.

---

[6] Source: Ministry of Education (Information Systems and Records).

[7] Source: Ministry of Education (Education Data Processing).

Summary Table

Surplus Classrooms in Ontario

	Rated Capacity (1977)	Enrolment (1976)
Public Elementary	1,312,966	929,056
Secondary	711,293	610,918
Separate	570,088	420,673
Total	2,594,347	1,960,647

TABLE 1

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED CHANGE IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT* BY COUNTIES AND DISTRICTS, 1971-1986

County/District	Actual		Projected		Change in Number and Percentage							
	1971	1976	1981	1986	1971-1976		1971-1981		1971-1986			
					No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Algoma	14290	11938	9901	9749	2352-	16.46-	4389-	30.71-	4541-	31.78-	2189-	18.34-
2. Brant	11975	10923	9853	9924	1052-	8.78-	2122-	17.72-	2051-	17.13-	999-	9.15-
3. Bruce	6900	7197	7886	9653	297-	4.30+	986+	14.29+	2753+	39.90+	2456+	34.13+
4. Carleton 1	20177	21320	22299	25464	1143+	5.66+	2122+	10.52+	5287+	26.20+	4144+	19.44+
5. Cochrane	6327	5938	5816	5330	389-	6.15-	511-	8.08-	997-	15.76-	608-	10.24-
6. Dufferin	3669	4271	5193	6789	602+	16.41+	1524+	41.54+	3120+	85.04+	2518+	58.96+
7. Elgin	8899	8668	8295	8611	231	2.60-	604-	6.79-	288-	3.24-	57-	0.66-
8. Essex 2	10045	9622	9187	9023	423-	4.21-	858-	8.54-	1022-	10.17-	599-	6.23-
9. Frontenac	12391	10440	8741	8424	1951-	15.75-	3650-	29.46-	3967-	32.02-	2016-	19.31-
10. Grey	10000	9343	8957	9391	657-	6.57-	1043-	10.43-	609-	6.09-	48+	0.51+
11. Haldimand-Norfolk	12225	10454	9001	8768	1771-	14.49-	3224	26.37-	3457-	28.28-	1686-	16.13-
12. Haliburton	1600	1498	1563	1801	102-	6.38-	37-	2.31-	201+	12.56+	303+	20.23+
13. Halton	29599	28099	27135	28734	1500-	5.07-	2464-	8.32-	685-	2.92-	635+	2.26+
14. Hastings	14019	12006	11455	11859	2013-	14.36-	2564-	18.29-	2160-	15.41-	147-	1.22-
15. Huron	7752	6830	6474	7388	922-	11.89-	1278-	16.49-	364-	4.70-	558+	8.17+
16. Kenora	7366	6337	5774	5530	1029-	13.97-	1592-	21.61-	1836-	24.93-	807-	12.73-
17. Kent	12580	10787	10094	9447	1793-	14.25-	2486-	19.76-	3133-	24.90-	1340-	12.42-
18. Lambton	15258	13068	12663	13407	2190-	14.35-	2595-	17.01-	1851-	12.13-	339+	2.59+
19. Lanark	5359	4850	4473	4348	509-	9.50-	886-	16.53-	1011-	18.87-	502-	10.35-
20. Leeds & Grenville	10689	9472	8425	8457	1217-	11.39-	2264-	21.18	2232-	20.88-	1015-	10.72-
21. Lennox & Addington	4919	4911	5076	5552	8-	0.16-	157+	3.19+	633+	12.87+	641+	13.05+
22. Niagara Region	42526	37454	32377	29587	5072-	11.93-	10149-	23.87-	12939-	30.43-	7867-	21.00--
23. Manitoulin	1307	1085	919	907	222-	17.00-	388-	29.69-	400-	30.60-	178-	16.41-
24. Middlesex 3	8641	7535	6956	7126	1106-	12.80-	1685-	19.50-	1515-	17.53-	409-	5.43-
25. Muskoka	5203	4775	4773	5809	428-	8.23-	430-	8.26-	606+	11.65+	1034+	21.65+
26. Nipissing	6797	5977	5106	5136	820-	12.06-	1691-	24.88-	1661-	24.44-	841-	14.07-
27. Oxford	11698	10132	9222	9656	1566-	13.39-	2476-	21.17-	2042-	17.46-	476-	4.70-
28. Parry Sound	5416	4815	4099	4220	601-	11.10-	1317-	24.32-	1196-	22.08-	595-	12.36-
29. Peel	41279	46270	51623	62215	4991+	12.09+	10344+	25.06+	20936+	50.72+	15945+	34.46+
30. Perth	8925	7826	7223	7522	1099-	12.31-	1702-	19.07-	1403-	15.72-	304-	3.88-
31. Peterborough	11975	11022	9938	10301	953-	7.96-	2037-	17.01-	1674-	13.98-	721-	6.54-
32. Prescott & Russell	920	1118	1373	1585	198+	21.52+	453+	49.24+	665+	72.28+	467+	41.77+
33. Prince Edward	3480	2912	2494	2712	568-	16.32-	986-	28.33-	768-	22.07-	200-	6.87-
34. Rainy River	3585	2981	2762	2587	604-	16.85-	823-	22.96-	998-	27.84-	394-	13.22-
35. Renfrew	8780	7201	5951	5635	1579-	17.98-	2829-	32.22-	3145-	35.82-	1566-	21.75-
36. Simcoe	24798	25022	27131	31494	224+	0.90+	2333+	9.41+	6696+	27.00+	6472+	25.87+
37. Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	7910	6694	5335	5140	1216-	15.37-	2575-	32.55-	2770-	35.02-	1554-	23.21-
38. Sudbury	16707	13219	10955	9198	3488-	20.88-	5752-	34.43-	7509-	44.95-	4021-	30.42-
39. Thunder Bay	16783	13887	12644	12035	2896-	17.26-	4139-	24.66-	4748-	28.29-	1852-	13.34-
40. Timiskaming	4996	3883	3347	3082	1113-	22.28-	1649-	33.01-	1914-	38.31-	801-	20.63-
41. Victoria	5592	5557	5894	7569	35-	0.63-	302+	5.40+	1977+	35.35+	2012+	36.21+
42. Waterloo	28701	28832	28940	29256	131+	0.46+	239+	0.83+	555+	1.93+	424+	1.47+
43. Wellington	14125	13605	13203	13644	520-	3.68-	922-	6.53-	481-	3.41-	39+	0.29+
44. Wentworth	13950	11594	9882	9731	2356-	16.89-	4068-	29.16-	4219-	30.24-	1863-	16.07-
45. York	27315	25439	25740	28663	1876-	6.87-	1575-	5.77-	1348+	4.94+	3224+	12.67+
46. Hamilton	30566	25961	21198	19474	4605-	15.07-	9368-	30.65-	11092-	36.29-	6487-	24.99-
47. London	27923	24378	21679	20146	3554-	12.72-	6253-	22.39-	7786-	27.87-	4232-	17.36-
48. Ottawa	21668	17138	13202	10561	4530-	20.91-	8466-	39.07-	11107-	51.26-	6577-	38.38-
49. Metro Toronto	231749	191022	153908	134677	40727-	17.57-	77841-	33.59-	97075-	41.89-	56345-	29.50-
50. Windsor	16527	13925	11782	10542	2602-	15.74-	4745-	28.71-	5985-	36.21-	3383-	24.29-

1 Excluding Ottawa

2 Excluding Windsor

3 Excluding London

*Excluding Kindergarten

TABLE 2

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED CHANGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT BY COUNTIES AND DISTRICTS, 1971-1986

County/District	Actual		Projected		1971-1976		1971-1981		1971-1986		1976-1986	
	1971	1976	1981	1986	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Algoma	9690	10117	8659	7339	427+	4.41+	1031-	10.64-	2351-	24.26-	2778-	27.46-
2. Brant	6891	6744	6386	5723	147-	2.13-	505-	7.33-	1168-	16.95-	1021-	15.14-
3. Bruce	3494	3632	3644	3874	138+	3.95+	150+	4.29+	380+	10.88+	242+	6.66+
4. Carleton[1]	10368	15134	16835	18216	4766+	45.97+	6467+	62.37+	7848+	75.69+	3082+	20.36+
5. Cochrane	8634	8813	7897	7229	179+	2.07+	737-	8.54-	1405-	16.27-	1584-	17.97-
6. Dufferin	1876	2351	2533	3023	475+	25.32+	657+	35.02+	1147+	61.14+	672+	28.58+
7. Elgin	4375	4855	4741	4443	480+	10.97+	366+	8.37+	68+	1.55+	412-	8.49-
8. Essex[2]	8198	8687	8389	8040	489+	5.96+	191+	2.33+	158-	1.93-	647-	7.45-
9. Frontenac	7825	8135	7049	6022	310+	3.96+	776-	9.92-	1803-	23.04-	2113-	25.97-
10. Grey	5466	5552	5125	4963	86+	1.57+	341-	6.24-	503-	9.20-	589-	10.61-
11. Haldimand-Norfolk	7349	6979	6215	5496	370-	5.03-	1134-	15.43-	1853-	25.21-	1483-	21.25-
12. Haliburton	597	676	647	642	79+	13.23+	50+	8.38+	45+	7.54+	34-	5.03-
13. Halton	16662	20935	20423	19237	4273+	25.65+	3761+	22.57+	2575+	15.54+	1698-	8.11-
14. Hastings	8817	9198	8136	7611	381+	4.32+	681-	7.72-	1206-	13.68-	1587-	17.25-
15. Huron	4661	4689	4113	3909	28+	0.60+	548-	11.76-	752-	16.13-	780-	16.63-
16. Kenora	3800	4030	3430	3033	230+	6.05+	370-	9.74-	767-	20.18-	997-	24.74-
17. Kent	8619	8370	7125	6671	249-	2.89-	1494-	17.33-	1948-	22.60-	1699-	20.30-
18. Lambton	9102	8897	7864	8113	205-	2.25-	1238-	13.60-	989-	10.87-	784-	8.81-
19. Lanark	3412	3619	3413	3217	207+	6.07+	1+	0.03+	195-	5.72-	402-	11.11-
20. Leeds & Grenville	5962	6232	5827	5067	270+	4.53+	135-	2.26-	895-	15.01-	1165-	18.69-
21. Lennox & Addington	2461	2725	2731	2777	264+	10.73+	270+	10.97+	316+	12.84+	52+	1.91+
22. Niagara	27388	26988	24046	20956	400-	1.46-	3342-	12.20-	6432-	23.48-	6032-	22.35-
23. Manitoulin	924	931	715	639	7+	0.76+	209-	22.62-	285-	30.84-	292-	31.36-
24. Middlesex[3]	3937	4373	3877	3544	436+	11.07+	60-	1.52-	393-	9.98-	829-	18.96-
25. Muskoka	2536	2835	2627	2544	299+	11.79+	91+	3.59+	8+	0.32+	291-	10.26-
26. Nipissing	7282	7467	6105	5013	185+	2.54+	1177-	16.16-	2269-	31.16-	2454-	32.86-
27. Oxford	6181	6298	5537	4839	117+	1.89+	644-	10.42-	1342-	21.71-	1459-	23.17-
28. Parry Sound	2615	2718	2284	1923	103+	3.94+	331-	12.66-	692-	26.46-	795-	29.25-
29. Peel	19884	28784	33947	42097	8900+	44.76+	14063+	70.73+	22213+	111.71+	13313+	46.25+
30. Perth	5189	5540	4785	4164	351+	6.76+	404-	7.79-	1025-	19.75-	1376-	24.84-
31. Peterborough	7496	7785	7037	6206	289+	3.86+	459-	6.12-	1290-	17.21-	1579-	20.28-
32. Prescott & Russell	4124	4251	3891	3508	127+	3.08+	233-	5.65-	616-	14.94-	743-	17.48-
33. Prince Edward	1448	1497	1309	1090	49+	3.38+	139-	9.60-	358-	24.72-	407-	27.19-
34. Rainy River	2391	2264	1877	1828	127-	5.31-	514-	21.50-	563-	23.55-	436-	19.26-
35. Renfrew	8200	7855	6514	5265	345-	4.21-	1686-	20.56-	2935-	35.79-	2590-	32.97-
36. Simcoe	13961	15959	15898	16851	1998+	14.31+	1937+	13.87+	2890+	20.70+	892+	5.59+
37. Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	8933	9232	7613	6193	299+	3.35+	1320-	14.78-	2740-	30.67-	3039-	32.92-
38. Sudbury	16266	16554	13252	11671	288+	1.77+	3014-	18.53-	4595-	28.25-	4883-	29.50-
39. Thunder Bay	11974	11752	10190	9600	222-	1.85-	1784-	14.90-	2374-	19.83-	2152-	18.31-
40. Timiskaming	4471	4285	3121	2649	186-	4.16-	1350-	30.19-	1822-	40.75-	1636-	38.18-
41. Victoria	2791	3159	3200	3210	368+	13.19+	409+	14.65+	419+	15.01+	51+	1.61+
42. Waterloo	16665	17850	17656	17372	1185+	7.11+	991+	5.95+	707+	4.24+	478-	2.68-
43. Wellington	8209	8695	7948	7580	486+	5.92+	261-	3.18-	629-	7.66-	1115-	12.82-
44. Wentworth excluding Hamilton	7281	7471	6198	5115	190+	2.61+	1083-	14.87-	2166-	29.75-	2356-	31.54-
45. York excluding Metro Toronto	14142	16446	16766	17184	2304+	16.29+	2624+	18.55+	3042+	21.51+	738+	4.49+
46. Hamilton	19697	18710	15240	12060	987-	5.01-	4457-	22.63-	7637-	38.77-	6650-	35.54-
47. London	16962	18554	15241	13373	1592+	9.39+	1721-	10.15-	3589-	21.16-	5181-	27.92-
48. Ottawa	26622	25211	18831	14103	1411-	5.30-	7791-	29.27-	12519-	47.03-	11108-	44.06-
49. Metro Toronto	131293	140355	123440	103492	9062+	6.90+	7853-	5.98-	27801-	21.17-	36863-	26.26-
50. Windsor	13563	12910	11033	9300	653-	4.81-	2530-	18.65-	4263-	31.43-	3610-	27.96-

[1] Excluding Ottawa
[2] Excluding Windsor
[3] Excluding London

TABLE 3

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED CHANGE IN R.C. SEPARATE SCHOOL ENROLMENT* BY COUNTIES AND DISTRICTS, 1971-1986

County/District	Actual		Projected		1971-1976		1971-1981		1971-1986		1976-1986	
	1971	1976	1981	1986	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1. Algoma	10571	9184	7774	7623	1387-	13.12-	2797-	26.46-	2948-	27.89-	1561-	17.00-
2. Brant	3430	3152	3039	3140	278-	8.10-	391-	11.40-	290-	8.45-	12-	0.38-
3. Bruce	1821	1909	2252	2318	88+	4.83+	431+	23.67+	997+	54.75+	909+	47.62+
4. Carleton[1]	10482	12870	14174	16204	2388+	22.78+	3692+	35.22+	5722+	54.59+	3334+	25.91+
5. Cochrane	12816	10390	8796	7987	2426-	18.93-	4020-	31.37-	4829-	37.68-	2403-	23.13-
6. Dufferin	215	331	540	735	116+	53.95+	325+	151.16+	520+	241.86+	404+	122.05+
7. Elgin	1676	1501	1215	1227	175-	10.44-	461-	27.51-	449-	26.79-	274-	18.25-
8. Essex[2]	9278	9351	9038	8878	73+	0.79+	240-	2.59-	400-	4.31-	473-	5.06-
9. Frontenac	3220	3085	2725	2622	135-	4.19-	495-	15.37-	598-	18.57-	463-	15.01-
10. Grey	834	842	934	986	8+	0.96+	100+	11.99+	152+	18.23+	144+	17.10+
11. Haldimand-Norfolk	2534	2441	2307	2226	93-	3.67-	227-	8.96-	308-	12.15-	215-	8.81
12. Halton	7181	7454	7662	8131	273+	3.80+	481+	6.70+	950+	13.23+	677+	9.08+
13. Hastings	3565	3330	3051	3166	235-	6.59-	514-	14.42-	399-	11.19-	164-	4.29-
14. Huron	1441	1345	1426	1610	96-	6.66-	15-	1.04-	169-	11.73-	265+	19.70+
15. Kenora	1671	1490	1205	1095	181-	10.83-	466-	27.89-	576-	34.47-	395-	26.51-
16. Kent	5391	5076	4509	4299	315-	5.84-	882-	16.36-	1092-	20.26-	777-	15.31-
17. Lambton	4743	4579	4984	5414	164-	3.46-	241+	5.08+	671+	14.15+	835+	18.24+
18. Lanark	1397	1175	1054	1018	222-	15.89-	343-	24.55-	379-	27.13-	157-	13.36-
19. Leeds & Grenville	1794	1531	1283	1268	263-	14.65-	511-	28.48-	526-	29.32-	263-	17.18-
20. Lennox/Addington	492	671	686	753	179+	36.38+	194+	39.43+	261+	53.05+	82+	12.22+
21. Niagara	19029	17177	15085	14018	1852-	9.73-	3944-	20.73-	5011-	26.33-	3159-	18.39-
22. Manitoulin	131	94	96	96	37-	28.24-	35-	26.72-	35-	26.72-	2+	2.13+
23. Middlesex[3]	9986	9317	8142	7543	669-	6.70-	1844-	18.47-	2443-	24.46-	1774-	19.04-
24. Nipissing	9995	7858	6406	6427	2137-	21.38-	3589-	35.91-	3568-	35.70-	1431-	18.21-
25. Oxford	1936	1810	1590	1654	126-	6.51-	346-	17.87-	282-	14.57-	156-	8.62-
26. Parry Sound	10	0	0	0	10-	100.00-	10-	100.00-	10-	100.00-	-0-	-0-
27. Peel	9930	17268	27827	37717	7338+	73.90+	17897+	180.23-	27787+	279.83+	20449+	118.42+
28. Perth	1767	1387	1168	1191	380-	21.51-	599-	33.90-	576-	32.60-	196-	14.13-
29. Peterborough	4008	3377	2768	2885	631-	15.74-	1240-	30.94-	1123-	28.02-	492-	14.57-
30. Prescott & Russell	7833	6609	5746	5370	1224-	15.63-	2087-	26.64-	1463-	18.68-	239-	3.62-
31. Prince Edward	112	104	103	104	8-	7.14-	9-	8.04-	8-	7.14-	-0-	0.00-
32. Rainy River	1102	810	784	738	292-	26.50-	318-	28.86-	364-	33.03-	72-	8.89-
33. Renfrew	6745	5348	4230	3985	1397-	20.71-	2515-	37.28-	2760-	40.92-	1363-	25.49-
34. Simcoe	5442	5261	5816	6786	181-	3.33-	374+	6.87+	1344+	24.70	1525+	28.99+
35. Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Glengarry	10013	7733	7062	7792	2280-	22.77-	2951-	29.47-	2221-	22.18-	59+	0.76+
36. Sudbury	24800	21134	17857	15344	3666-	14.78-	6943-	28.00-	9456-	38.13-	5790-	27.40-
37. Thunder Bay	8065	7665	7128	6756	400-	4.96-	937-	11.62-	1309-	16.23-	909-	11.86-
38. Timiskaming	3904	3038	2463	2301	866-	22.18-	1441-	36.91-	1603-	41.06-	737-	24.26-
39. Victoria	501	530	642	825	29+	5.79+	141+	28.14+	324+	64.67+	295+	55.66+
40. Waterloo	15128	15386	14727	14830	258+	1.71+	401-	2.65-	298-	1.97-	556-	3.61-
41. Wellington	4752	4579	4258	4338	173-	3.64-	494-	10.40-	369-	7.77-	196-	4.28-
42. Hamilton-Wentworth	21876	20478	17364	15807	1398-	6.39-	4512-	20.63-	6069-	27.74-	4671-	22.81-
43. York	4478	6376	8296	9471	1898+	42.38+	3818+	85.26+	4993+	111.50+	3095+	48.54+
44. Ottawa	25338	17711	13297	10656	7627-	30.10-	12041-	47.52-	14682-	57.94-	7055-	39.83-
45. Metro Toronto	70298	77886	69578	61319	7588-	10.79+	720-	1.02-	8979-	12.77-	16567-	21.27-
46. Windsor	18287	15755	12987	11579	2532-	13.85-	5300-	28.98-	6708-	36.68-	4176-	26.51-

[1] Carleton excluding Ottawa

[2] Essex excluding Windsor

[3] Middlesex including London

*Excluding Kindergarten

TABLE 4

ONTARIO: PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLMENT, 1976-1986
THE DECADE OF PROJECTED DECLINE

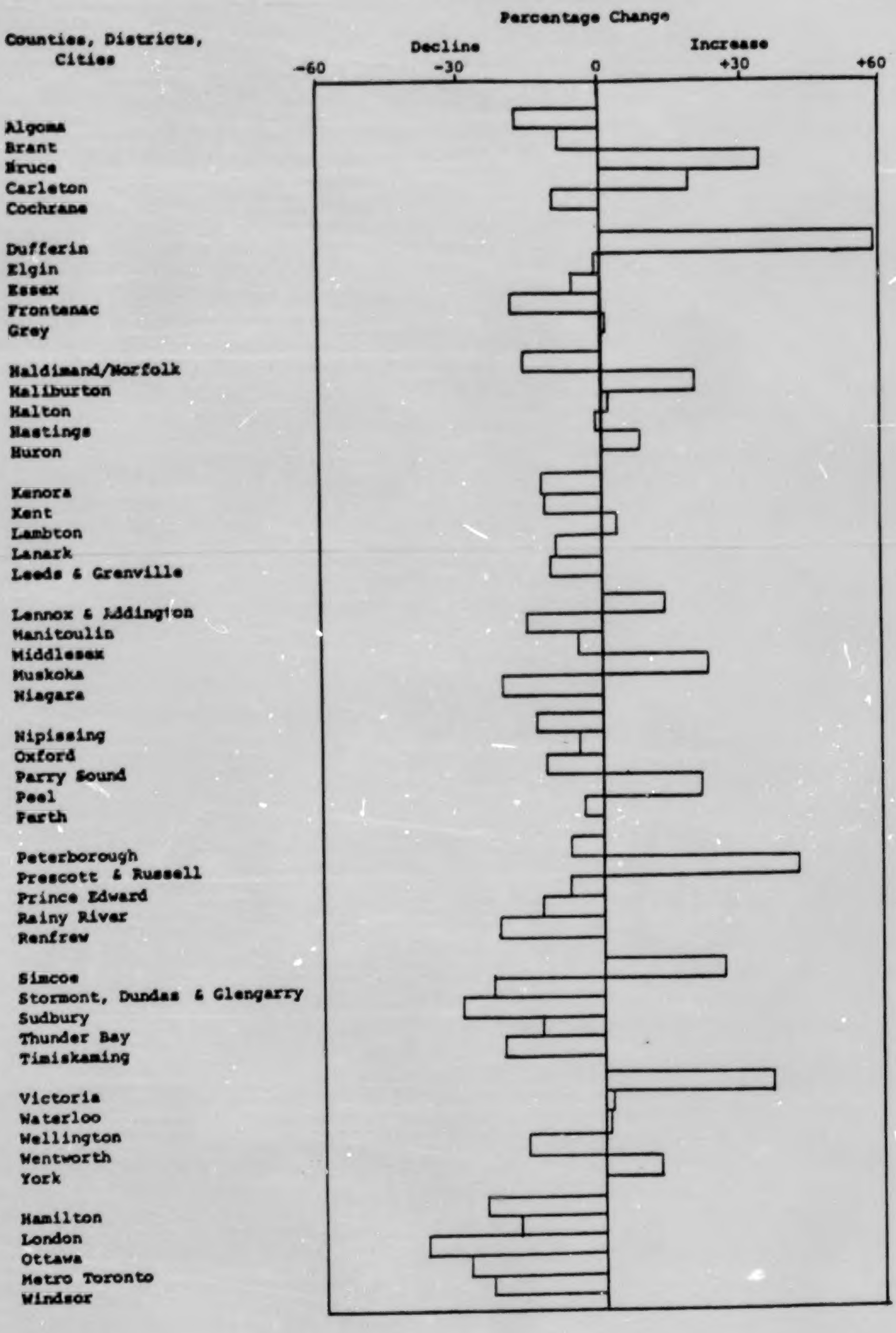

TABLE 5

ONTARIO: SECONDARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT, 1976-1986
THE DECADE OF PROJECTED DECLINE

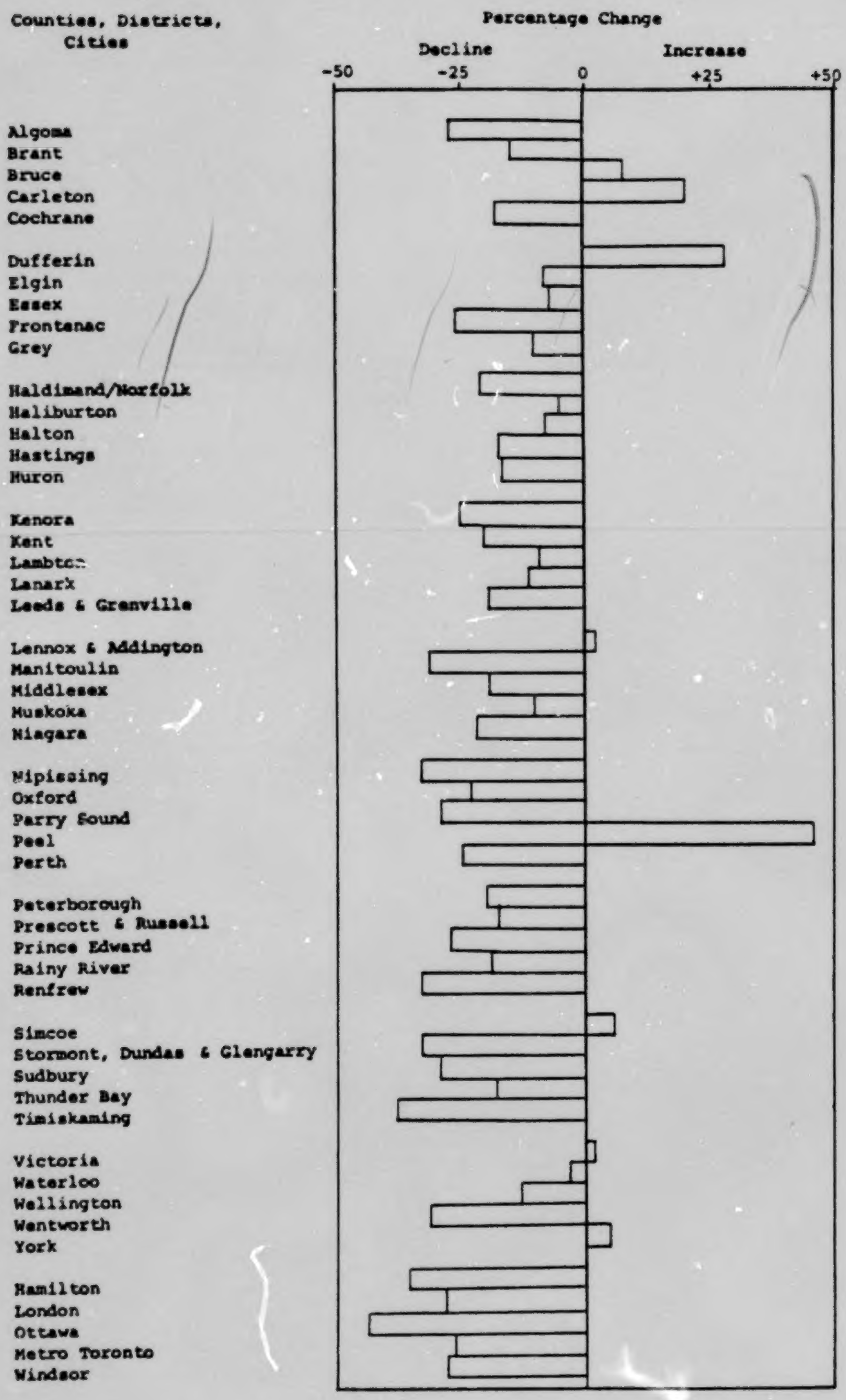

TABLE 6

ONTARIO: ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE ENROLMENT, 1976-1986
THE DECADE OF PROJECTED DECLINE

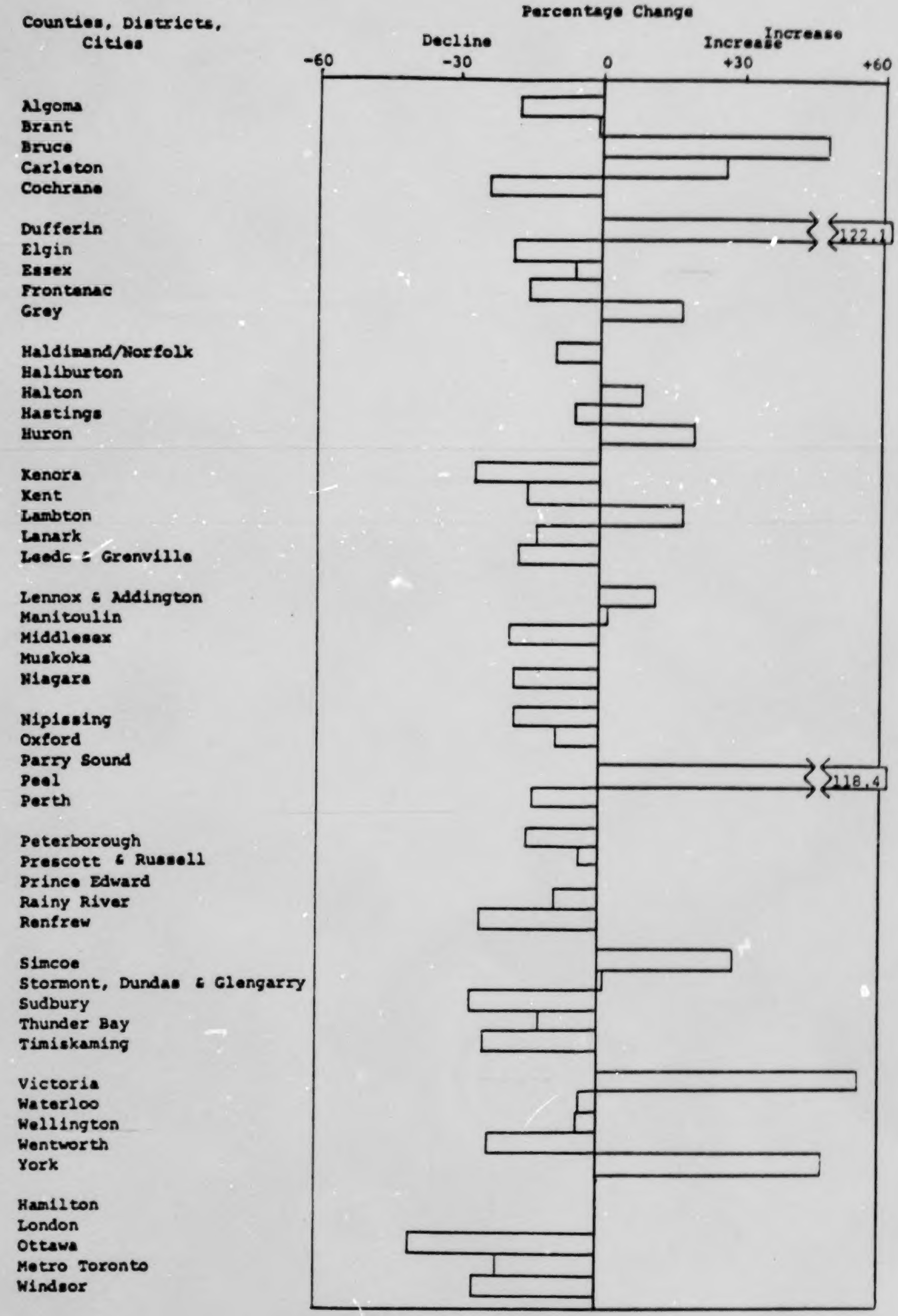

TABLE 7

ESTIMATE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF SURPLUS CLASSROOMS IN ONTARIO, BY BOARD (1976) — PUBLIC ELEMENTARY

County/District	Capacity (Nov '77)	Enrolment (Sept '76)
Atikokan	1,460	913
Brant	16,488	12,099
Bruce	8,033	8,047
Carleton	30,016	23,543
Central Algoma	2,528	1,712
Chapleau	565	371
Cochrane-Iroquois Falls	2,474	1,741
Dryden	5,007	3,508
Dufferin	5,805	4,809
Durham	38,774	30,656
East Parry Sound	4,182	3,015
East York	14,880	10,010
Elgin County	11,706	9,660
Espanola	1,911	1,319
Essex County	14,316	10,716
Etobicoke	49,283	31,416
Fort Frances-Rainy River	3,883	2,425
Frontenac County	17,663	11,531
Geraldton	901	566
Grey County	13,662	10,361
Haldimand	6,503	4,832
Haliburton	2,151	1,644
Halton	41,190	31,344
Hamilton	47,385	29,100
Hastings County	16,921	13,292
Hearst	490	390
Huron County	10,061	7,656
Kapuskasing	1,156	806
Kenora	2,796	2,089
Kent County	15,321	12,111
Kirkland Lake	2,730	1,729
Lake Superior	2,730	1,301
Lakehead	20,730	13,157
Lambton County	21,587	14,586
Lanark County	7,049	5,378
Leeds & Grenville	13,584	10,535
Lennox & Addington	6,900	5,510
Lincoln County	29,805	21,014
London	41,643	27,713
Manitoulin	1,567	1,212
Michipicoten	641	589
Middlesex County	11,144	8,380
Muskoka	6,140	5,121
Niagara South	30,682	20,599
Nipigon-Red Rock	1,016	635
Nipissing	8,744	6,038
Norfolk	8,987	6,770
North Shore	2,746	1,874
North York	99,016	60,175
Northumberland & Newcastle	18,481	13,738
Ottawa	36,499	20,381
Oxford County	14,442	11,263
Peel	67,352	51,603
Perth County	11,283	8,740
Peterborough County	14,939	12,224
Prescott & Russell County	1,183	1,218
Prince Edward County	4,543	3,217
Red Lake	1,217	1,153
Renfrew County	11,833	8,282
Sault Ste. Marie	13,356	9,116
Scarborough	79,123	54,904
Simcoe County	32,331	28,019
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	11,692	7,365
Sudbury	20,237	12,773
Timiskaming	4,133	2,921
Timmins	4,375	3,208
Toronto	90,286	58,348
Victoria County	7,486	6,174
Waterloo County	42,395	32,349
Wellington County	19,664	15,269
Wentworth County	19,230	12,800
West Parry Sound	3,657	2,535
Windsor	25,137	15,582
York Borough	18,997	13,676
York County	34,776	28,200
TOTAL	1,312,966	929,056

ESTIMATE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF SURPLUS CLASSROOMS IN ONTARIO, BY BOARD (1976) — SECONDARY

County/District	Capacity (Nov '77)	Enrolment (Sept '76)
Atikokan	780	603
Brant	8,230	6,744
Bruce	4,905	3,632
Carleton	17,740	15,134
Central Algoma	900	749
Chapleau	400	364
Cochrane-Iroquois Falls	2,170	1,800
Dryden	2,220	1,866
Dufferin	2,500	2,351
Durham	19,850	17,019
East Parry Sound	1,130	1,351
East York	4,330	5,033
Elgin County	6,310	4,855
Espanola	1,460	1,150
Essex County	8,970	8,687
Etobicoke	24,095	22,012
Fort Frances-Rainy River	2,235	1,661
Frontenac	9,870	8,135
Geraldton	830	711
Grey County	6,480	5,552
Haldimand	4,055	2,975
Haliburton	710	676
Halton	21,810	20,935
Hamilton	27,135	18,710
Hastings County	10,545	9,198
Hearst	5,730	4,689
Kapuskasing	3,250	2,271
Kenora	1,885	1,675
Kent County	9,984	8,370
Kirkland Lake	1,820	1,707
Lake Superior	1,415	968
Lakehead	11,850	9,603
Lambton County	9,670	8,897
Lanark County	4,145	3,619
Leeds & Grenville	7,675	6,232
Lennox & Addington	3,750	2,725
Lincoln County	15,810	12,629
London	24,810	18,554
Manitoulin	960	931
Michipicoten	790	580
Middlesex County	4,685	4,373
Muskoka	2,700	2,835
Niagara South	18,640	14,359
Nipigon-Red Rock	815	470
Nipissing	10,325	7,467
Norfolk	5,465	4,004
North Shore	2,530	1,731
North York	30,745	36,203
Northumberland & Newcastle	9,915	7,858
Ottawa	32,395	25,211
Peel	31,370	28,784
Perth County	5,865	5,540
Peterborough County	9,640	7,785
Prescott & Russell County	4,835	4,251
Prince Edward County	1,600	1,497
Red Lake	650	489
Renfrew County	9,145	7,855
Sault Ste. Marie	10,505	6,968
Scarborough	33,625	31,755
Simcoe County	18,935	15,959
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	11,439	9,232
Sudbury	19,490	15,040
Timiskaming	3,180	2,578
Timmins	4,765	3,773
Toronto	37,905	36,790
Victoria County	3,390	3,159
Waterloo County	21,635	17,850
Wellington County	9,670	8,695
Wentworth County	8,885	7,471
West Parry Sound	1,240	1,367
Windsor	15,910	12,910
York Borough	9,790	8,562
York County	19,235	16,446
TOTAL	711,293	610,918

TABLE 9

ESTIMATE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF SURPLUS CLASSROOMS IN ONTARIO, BY BOARD (1976) — SEPARATE

County/District	Capacity (Nov '77)	Enrolment (Sept '76)
Atikokan	565	366
Brant	5,257	3,445
Bruce-Grey	3,937	3,131
Carleton	21,390	15,692
Chapleau Panet & Township	675	404
Cochrane-Iroquois Falls	3,417	1,995
Dryden	700	434
Dufferin-Peel	22,382	21,919
Durham Region	11,739	8,567
Elgin County	2,122	1,658
Essex County	12,343	10,358
Fort Frances — Rainy River	1,130	659
Frontenac-Lennox & Addington Co.	5,986	4,381
Geraldton	1,130	854
Haldimand Norfolk	3,751	2,739
Halton	10,382	8,225
Hamilton-Wentworth	31,194	22,320
Hastings-Prince Edward County	4,850	3,909
Hearst District	2,405	1,570
Huron-Perth	3,958	2,986
Kapuskasing District	5,549	3,088
Kenora District	1,546	1,256
Kent County	7,277	5,768
Kirkland Lake District	2,883	1,634
Lakehead District	8,413	7,023
Lambton County	7,133	5,615
Lanark, Leeds & Grenville County	4,463	2,949
Lincoln County	11,226	8,475
London & Middlesex	16,339	11,085
Metropolitan Toronto	103,242	90,876
Michipicoten District	990	679
Nipissing District	13,845	9,133
North Shore District	4,722	3,180
Ottawa	42,454	20,710
Oxford County	3,121	2,184
Peterborough, Victoria, Northumberland & Newcastle	7,627	5,999
Red Lake	210	95
Renfrew County	9,948	6,093
Sault Ste. Marie District	8,937	7,301
Simcoe County	8,621	5,781
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	15,277	8,974
Sudbury District	32,904	23,831
Timiskaming District	3,740	1,983
Timmins District	7,554	5,268
Waterloo County	22,983	16,827
Welland County	16,412	11,910
Wellington County	6,882	4,959
Windsor	25,638	17,358
York Region	9,006	7,675
TOTAL	570,088	420,673

B. SITE STATISTICS

Number of Schools Closed

Tables 10 to 13 below set out as comprehensive a picture as possible of (1) school closures since 1970 by board -- public elementary, secondary and R.C.S.S.; and (2) sale of sites and buildings in Ontario in recent years (1970 - 1976)[8].

CLOSINGS: Summary of Data by Year

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	Total
Pub.	132	115	112	137	29	14 5*	25 4*	33 49*	597 58
Sec.	11	6	4	5	4 3	0	0	9	39 3
Sep.	27	30	37	41	13	8	8	16 26*	177 26
Total	170	151	153	183	46 3	22 5	25 4	58 75	813 87

* - denotes annexation

Clearly the elementary panel has, during this period, seen the most instances of school closure. However, all three systems show a notable drop in the number of closings in the last three to four years. This might indicate that boards have exercised other options, such as parallel community use of surplus classrooms, or twinning two schools under one principal. In the past year or two, a trend toward annexation of elementary schools can be discerned.

During this same recent period, private schools have also closed. Many of them have been converted to care and treatment facilities.

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[8] Source: Ministry of Education:
(1) Information Systems and Records
(2) School Business and Finance

TABLE 10

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLOSINGS IN ONTARIO
1970 — 1977

Board	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Atikokan					1			
Brant County	1			10		1		1-3*
Bruce County			1	1			1	
Carleton			3	1				
Central Algoma				1				
Chapleau							1	
Cochrane/Iroquois Falls			2				1	
Dryden	1			1				
Dufferin County		1			1			
Durham County	3	1	16			2*	3	1*
East York								1
East Parry Sound			3			1	5*	
Elgin County	2	7	3	2				
Essex County	2	7			5	1*		1-1*
Etobicoke					1		1	1
Fort Frances-Rainy River				1	3	1-1*		1*
Frontenac County	3	6	6	2				1*
Grey County	26			1	1			1
Haldimand	1							1
Haliburton County		2	4					
Halton			1	6	1			
Hamilton		3		4			2-1*	2-5*
Hastings	2	3	1	5	1	3		1
Huron County		7				1		
Kapuskasing		1						
Kenora				1			1	
Kent County		2		5				2
Kirkland Lake	2		1			1		
Lakehead		1		11	1			1*
Lake Superior	2	2		1				
Lambton County	1	3	3				1	
Lanark	11	1		1				2*
Leeds & Grenville		1	5	6				
Lennox and Addington	6	4	4	1				
Lincoln County		2	2	2			1-1*	3-5*
London		1	1	7				6*
Manitoulin			1		1			1
Michipicoten		1	1	1				
Middlesex County		2	2	1	1			
Muskoka		1		2	1		2	1*
Niagara South	8	5		1	1		2	2
Nipigon-Red Rock				2				
Nipissing		1	2				1	
Norfolk			1	2				
North Shore			2					1
Northumberland & Newcastle		3	3	1		1	2*	2-4*
North York	1			2			1	
Ottawa		4	1					5
Oxford		1		8			1	1-2*
Peel			1	2	2	2	1	
Perth County	24	5		2				
Peterborough		2	3	1		1*	2	2
Prescott & Russell County		2			2			
Prince Edward County	1							1-1*
Red Lake			3					
Renfrew County	6	1			1	1	1	1*
Sault Ste. Marie		3		1	1			1*
Scarborough	1			2		1		1
Simcoe County	4	1	6	4		1		1*
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	2	3		1				1
Sudbury	3	2	10					1-1*
Timmins	2							
Timiskaming		2						2*
Toronto	1			2	3			1
Victoria County	7		11	6				
Waterloo	1	2	2	4	1			
Wentworth County		1	3	12			1	2*
West Parry Sound	4							
Wellington County	2	1		4			1	
Windsor		1	1					2
York Borough								1
York County	2	16	2	6				2*
York Region			1					

*Inter-Panel Transfer

TABLE 11

SECONDARY SCHOOL CLOSINGS IN ONTARIO
1970 - 1977

BOARD	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Central Algoma			3					
Essex County	1							
Frontenac County								2
Grey County		1						
Hamilton	1							
Hastings County	1							
Hearst	1							
Lake Superior		2						
Lambton County								2
Niagara South	1				1			1
Nipissing		1						
Northumberland & Newcastle								1
Ottawa	2	2		3	1			
Perth County	1							
Renfrew County	1							
Simcoe County								3
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	1				2			
Sudbury			1					
Wellington	1							
Windsor				2				
York County					3*			

* Inter Panel Transfer

TABLE 12

SEPARATE SCHOOL CLOSINGS IN ONTARIO
1970 - 1977

BOARD	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Brant County				6				3*
Bruce-Grey County		2						
Carleton				1	1	1		1
Cochrane-Iroquois Falls		1	2	1	1		1	
Durham Region					1	1		
Elgin County					2	1		3*
Essex County	1	1	3					
Fort Frances- Rainy River District						1		
Frontenac, Lennox & Addington		4	6					1-2*
Halton							1	1
Haldimand/Norfolk	1			1				
Hamilton-Wentworth	1							2*
Hastings-Prince Edward County		1						
Hearst	1							
Kapuskasing District						1		
Kent County	1		1	2				
Kirkland Lake District	1		2					
Lakehead District			1	1	1			
Lambton County				1				
Lanark, Leeds & Grenville					1			
Lincoln County		1	1					1-1*
London & Middlesex			2					1*
Metropolitan Separate			1				1	
Nipissing District		5	1	2				2
North Shore			2				1	
Ottawa	6	4	4	6	2	1	1	9-2*
Peterborough, Victoria & Newcastle	1	1	1	2	1			9*
Prescott & Russell	1		1					
Renfrew County	2			1				
Sault Ste. Marie				1			1	
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry	1	1	1	3	1			
Sudbury District		3	3	1	1	2	2	1
Timmins District				4				
Timiskaming		2	2	4				
Waterloo County	2	1						
Welland County			1	3				
Wellington County	2	1						
Windsor	3	2	1	1				2*
York Region			1					1*

* Inter Panel Transfer

Sale of Sites and Buildings

Once a school building has been closed, a decision must be made on its disposition. Sale of surplus board property and inter-panel transfer rank highest in this category.

Table 13 gives the figures presently available on numbers of buildings and/or sites sold per year (1970-76) and revenue received from these sales. It is followed by a summary of reasons for selling, in order of frequency. Information given on some of the new uses is also included here.

TABLE 13

Sales of School Sites and Buildings in Ontario, 1970-1976

(Elementary, Secondary and Separate)

	Sale Data	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Elementary	No Sales							
	sites	23*	41	37	55(+6P)	23	17	27
	bldgs	99	83(+3P)	68(+14P)	68(+4P)	28	16	29 (+Ps)
	Revenue($)							
	sites	632,540	83(+3P)	472,837	2,983,456	963,649	580,268	613,985
	bldgs	580,908	928,893*	1,733,915	1,757,911	758,205	430,813	1,475,852
Secondary	No. Sales							
	sites	4*	9	8	6	8	6	7
	bldgs	3	6(+Ps)	5(+Ps)	5	2(+4P)	6	2
	Revenue($)							
	sites	10,074	18,226	36,312*	1,079,568	457,867	71,032	54,033
	bldgs	205,926	409,448	215,900	245,776	203,647	291,243	64,435
Seperate	No. Sales							
	sites	16	28	12	45	16	5	12
	bldgs	19(+18P)	14	12	17	6(+2P)	6	8
	Revenue($)							
	sites	344,946	3,671,090	803,788*	11,751,073	1,451,135	93,470	196,042
	bldgs.	277,628	527,250	482,408	257,241	448,587	649,339	551,317

*Figure approximate
P denotes portable for information purposes

SALE OF SCHOOL SITES AND BUILDINGS IN ONTARIO, 1970 TO 1976

A) Summary of Most Frequently Stated Reasons

(1) No longer required for school use

This is by far the most common reason. Most are surplus; a few have been out of use for years; and about one-third have been replaced by central schools. In some instances, there is overlap with Reason #2.

(2) Amalgamation and consolidation

Small schools (up to 3 rooms) have been sold and others consolidated due to (1) declining enrolment, and (2) amalgamation of small boards into larger units.

(3) Expropriation for road-widening, sewers, etc.

(4) Inter-panel transfer

(5) A smaller number of reasons stated included physical condition of building; trade for equal value; abandonment; and, in one instance, site too small for needed expansion.

B) Uses

A considerable number have been sold for recreation*, educational* and social services, conversion to private residences or housing for senior citizens and, in one case, to a rehabilitation centre for alcoholics.

---

* Community and board administration centres; schools for mentally and trainable retarded children.

Final Comment

We should like to emphasize that our role must be seen as that of providing information which can serve as a facilitating agent. Boards are encouraged to apply their own figures in order to refine the statistical information presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER II

COPING WITH DECLINING ENROLMENT

A. EIGHT SELECTED CASE STUDIES

Four facts emerge from the information contained in the various documents on declining enrolment which were submitted to CODE by a number of school boards in Ontario:

1. A surprisingly large number of boards and communities refuse to acknowledge that the decreases can or will affect them. They delude themselves with three basic misconceptions:
    a) Problems can be resolved through normal attrition, new housing in subdivisions which will attract young families, and potential increase in industrial growth and/or tourism. (Actually, high unemployment is forcing young people to seek their fortune elsewhere, especially in Alberta where the economy is on an upswing.)
    b) Enrolment decline will not start, or be really felt, until about 1981.
    c) Enrolment decline is in evidence now, but will stabilize or even disappear in a few years.

    All these premises are hypothetical, of course; they appear to be symptoms of a malady called "wishful thinking".

2. The majority of boards have compiled enrolment statistics, and built special redundancy clauses concerning surplus staff into the collective agreements of teachers and principals -- yet no mention is made of plans for facilities.

3. Five-year enrolment projections (up to 1981 in most cases) are usually given, the rationale being that with the 'echo of the baby boom' predicted some time ago by Zoltan Zsigmond of Statistics Canada, the number of school-age children will increase again in the early 1980's. (This echo has since been proven a myth.)

4. Then there are those board officials who recognize the problem, yet find themselves helplessly adrift in the middle of a stormy ocean -- unable to cope. The abridged letter cited below, which exemplifies this fourth stance, was written by one of the directors of education to the Commission:

> "...we (referring to himself and the board superintendents) feel very strongly that serious effects of declining enrolment are already being felt in (our) county and will escalate and continue to be felt for a considerable period of time. Indeed, with declining enrolments many unfavourable effects will be found in this school system, such as the following:
>
> 1. There has been a loss of a sizeable number of teaching positions. We have already had to reduce our elementary teaching staff in each of the past two years, and a reduction in the secondary (level) has now started because of declining enrolments.
>
> 2. Reductions in the number of students will produce losses of grant revenue....
>
> 3. A larger number of grades will have to be (split), especially in our smaller schools. The only way to prevent this, of course, would be to reduce our pupil/teacher ratio, and this would correspondingly increase our educational costs per pupil.
>
> 4. The future of smaller elementary schools is definitely threatened if our projections are correct.... I suppose that the revised figures will show an accelerating decline to our present figures.
>
> 5. Secondary school declining enrolments will have a marked effect, especially on smaller schools. In particular, XYZ District High School currently has 709 students, and we envision that this will drop to 620 by 1981. Indeed, our current enrolment is below the projected rate of decline. In such a situation, the number of options we can provide will have to be tightened considerably...
>
> As you can see from the very few examples I have provided we are already quite well aware of effects of declining enrolment. What we need is positive direction for how to avoid, or at least minimize, these effects. Anything that the Ministry can do through (the) Commission on Declining School Enrolments in Ontario to help us alleviate the difficulties will be appreciated."

The reason for this widespread lack of concern and foresight (in some instances) -- coupled with a feeling of helplessness (in others) -- seems to lie mainly in a fear of open criticism and opposition from parents and the community in the matter of deciding future use and options regarding partially vacant or surplus classrooms and/or school buildings. Boards are criticized by the public for not foreseeing the sharp drop in enrolment. Their credibility with respect to decisions to consolidate schools is questioned. There may be still another reason: several boards, such as Carleton, Elgin, Lambton R.C.S.S., Peel, and Durham, are apparently not experiencing any decline as yet, while the Haldimand/Norfolk R.C.S.S. and Chapleau boards, for instance, speak of a "slow but gradual" decline with "no significant drop". Scarborough, Ottawa, Hamilton and Halton -- to name only a few -- face a mixed growth-and-decline situation in different sections of the school division. Taking Halton as an example, the decline occurs only in Oakville and in the south of Burlington, but is affecting overall regional enrolment. Opposite trends have been developing in Hamilton, too. In 1976, the most complex accommodation problems were evident in the growing areas to the far east end of the city. Three schools on the north side had declining enrolments and available space, while two others in the south were facing rapid growth. The picture has changed considerably since then: decline is more widespread now, except for three areas of the city where housing development is taking place.

It should be noted that most boards which have developed policies to date are large urban ones -- perhaps because the problem is felt more acutely. One item, transportation, is a point in question. With rural boards, busing students is common practice so that, if a school is closed, transportation is one of the minor considerations. In the cities, however, the opposite is true. Hazardous traffic conditions raise the issue to a priority. Another factor should be borne in mind: city boards usually have an experienced research and planning department which provides ready access to relevant statistical information, including up-to-date and reliable enrolment projections and school histories, for example.

As previously mentioned, seven sample boards were randomly selected from among the constructive "change managers". Their common goal has been (1) to consider the whole spectrum of outcroppings from enrolment decline simultaneously; (2) to confront the issue squarely; and (3) to draw up suitable policies to solve their difficulties before they get out of hand. The New York Study -- Enrollment Trends: Programs for the Future (1976) -- which, in our opinion, can make a significant contribution in this area, concludes Chapter II(A). We shall extract only those guidelines or adopted practices that reflect pupil accommodation -- the focus of this report.

ETOBICOKE

Information was obtained from two sources: (1) Documents submitted to the Commission by the Etobicoke Board, and (2) Interview with H.W. Moore, Controller of Planning and Plant, and Lorraine Lowe, Research Assistant.

The Documents

The materials developed by the Board of Education for the Borough of Etobicoke serve as a model to Ontario boards that are just beginning to set up guidelines. They include copies of reports that have been presented to the board in order to establish policies and practices which would result in financial savings.

A. Pairing of Public Schools - September, 1975

February 19, 1975 (Board Policy)

An alarm signal sounded when the number of pupils dropped from 41,125 in 1970 to 33,484 in September, 1975 -- the equivalent of losing 15 schools averaging over 500 pupils each! Schools were expected to range in grade enrolments from 95 to 1,186 in September.

The Public School Principals' Association and senior board staff shared the concerns with regard to the "increasing imbalance in costs per pupil of providing a principal in every school". A subcommittee of the P.S.P.A., upon studying the present situation, submitted suggestions with respect to the pairing of schools. These suggestions, which appear very similar to those prepared by senior board personnel, are:

1. that in pairing, two small schools be the responsibility of one principal;
2. that the two schools to be paired be close geographically in order to minimize travel time;
3. that if it is necessary for one secretary to be shared between the two paired schools, her time be flexible and organized by the principal;
4. that if it is necessary for the resource centre teacher to be shared between the two paired schools, the arrangement for use of her time be flexible and organized by the principal;

5. that where two schools are paired, it be on the basis that at least one of them will be able to remain open for a number of years.

It was recommended that the principle of pairing small public schools, effective September 1975, be endorsed.

The document "Proposed Organization - Twinning of Public Schools", March 12, 1975 preceded the actual policy. Details with respect to the proposed twinning or pairing of six sets of small schools are outlined in a table (not shown). Available and required accommodation in the 12 schools in question is summarized in tabulated form, indicating the total number of surplus rooms in each school.

B(1) Closing of a Public School
December 20, 1972 (Board Policy)

Board Policy #39 reads as follows:

1. Notice of Closing

   Where possible, a minimum of one year's notice shall be given to the parents and residents in a school attendance area for the closing of a school.

2. Advisory Committee - Membership

   An advisory committee consisting of the regional superintendent, the associate superintendent of supervision and personnel, the principal of the school, one teacher, five parents, and the principal(s) of the school(s) to which the children are to be transferred shall be set up.

   Advisory Committee - Purposes

   (i) To involve parents and staff in the implementation of a board decision.

   (ii) To protect the academic, social and emotional welfare of the students.

   (iii) To allay concerns of pupils, parents and staff.

   (iv) To review locations of homes of students in relation to locations of new schools, and to make recommendations with respect to transportation needs.

3. Transportation

(a) Transportation shall be provided for junior school pupils if:

  (i) The maximum walking distance to the school serving their attendance area exceeds one mile.

  (ii) Unusually dangerous traffic conditions exist.

(b) Transportation shall be provided for middle school pupils if:

  (i) The maximum walking distance to the school serving their attendance area exceeds two miles.

  (ii) Unusually heavy traffic conditions exist.

  (iii) Public transportation is not available.

4. Furniture and Equipment

(a) A complete inventory shall be made of all furniture and equipment in a school at time of closing.

(b) All furniture and equipment shall be inspected to determine its condition for -

  (i) Possible reuse in the system.

  (ii) Declaring it obsolete and selling it by auction or tender.

  (iii) Using it for trade-in on the purchase of new equipment for other schools.

(c) The furniture and equipment declared to be reusable shall be stored to be used to meet budget or other requests.

The Etobicoke Board appears to be the first declining system in the province to have successfully tackled the question of school closure -- through instituting its Board Policy #39 as early as 1972.

B(2) Case Study: Proposed Closing of Crestwood Junior School

March 12, 1975

(a) Crestwood

Crestwood Junior School was located in an area of the borough where the need for pupil spaces had decreased the most rapidly. Two junior schools and one senior school in the immediate vicinity had already been closed. The number of pupils (including special education) had shrunk by 75 in a five-year period: from 229 in 1970 to 154 in 1975. (The majority of the pupils attending the special education class lived outside the Crestwood Junior School attendance area.)

Available accommodation as well as current and proposed staff organization were noted, and long-term need determined. The area served by Crestwood was basically fully developed. No major changes were expected to take place (if District 8 Plan was to be adhered to). Based on available statistics, the grade enrolment was to have dropped to approximately 75 pupils who would now be attending Sunnylea Junior School as of September, 1976.

(b) Sunnylea

(Enrolment figures for Sunnylea show a decline from 329 pupils in 1970 to 281 in 1975.) Available accommodation here proved to be superior to that at Crestwood -- there would be six additional classrooms. Regarding long-term need, Sunnylea's attendance area was also basically fully developed; again, as with Crestwood, no major changes were expected to take place, provided that the District 8 Plan would be adhered to. Projected enrolment statistics indicated that grade enrolment would be dropping to approximately 90 pupils, then returning to about 105. One of the factors in the decision for Sunnylea was its geographical proximity to Crestwood. This meant a minimum of travel time on the bus for junior school pupils.

(c) Transportation

All of the pupils attending Crestwood Junior School lived more than one mile away from Sunnylea Junior School. In accordance with Board Policy #39, transportation would have to be provided.

(d) Accommodation Required

Sunnylea and Crestwood Combined

Type of School	Jan. 31/75* (ACTUAL)		Sept. 30/76 (ESTIMATE)	
Jr. Kg.	40 pupils	1 room(s)	36 pupils	1 room(s)
Sr. Kg.	45 "	1 "	46 "	1 "
Gr. 1-5	214 "	7 "	194 "	6 "
Adv. Cl.	117 "	4 "	117 "	4 "

* The TESOL class could be transferred to another school in the area.

(1) 30.6 P.T.R. (2) 32.3 P.T.R.

Notes:

1. On the basis of the 1976 estimate there was one surplus classroom. This would have been required, had it been decided to lower the P.T.R.
2. It was unlikely that the number of grade pupils would be exceeding 200 pupils in the next ten years.
3. There were two specially designed basement classrooms that could be used for French, art and music.

(e) Recommendations

1. That the board approve in principle the closing of Crestwood Junior School at the end of the 1975/76 school year.

2. That the pupils living in the present Crestwood Junior School area attend Sunnylea Junior School commencing September, 1976.

3. That in accordance with Board Policy #39, an "Advisory Committee" be established.

C. Formula for Closing of Surplus Classrooms: Utilization of Surplus Space - Public Schools

(a) That in public schools where surplus accommodation exists, surplus classrooms be utilized by the school for its own purposes on the following basis:

1 - 8 grade or special education classes -- 1 surplus room.
9 - 16 grade or special education classes -- 2 surplus rooms.
17+ grade or special education classes -- 3 surplus rooms.

(b) That the surplus classrooms over this formula that are not leased to community organizations be locked.

Under this policy, approximately 70 rooms were locked. (The number is increasing each year.)

D. Surplus Space

(a) Surplus Classrooms Being Used By Outside Agencies

As of December 1, 1976 the following surplus class rooms were being used by outside agencies:

1.	Albion Gardens Junior School - Royal Conservatory of Music	1 Room
2.	Briarcrest Junior School - Metropolitan Toronto Association for the Mentally Retarded	4 Rooms
3.	Cloverdale Junior School - Family Court	4 Rooms
4.	Green Meadows Junior School - Opportunity for Advancement	2 Rooms
5.	Princess Margaret Junior School - Etobicoke Parks and Recreation Services Department	2 Rooms
6.	Rosethorn Junior School - Metropolitan Toronto School Board (Mentally Retarded)	3 Rooms

7.	Silver Creek Junior School - The Silver Creek Association for Children with Handicaps	3 Rooms
8.	Valleyfield Junior School - Etobicoke Social Planning Council	1 Room
9.	West Deane Junior School - Family Service Association of Metropolitan Toronto	1 Room
10.	Former James S. Bell Public School - Metropolitan Toronto - Day Care Centre	Lakeshore Boulevard Wing

(b) Surplus Schools

As of December 1, 1976, the following alternative uses were being made of surplus schools:

1. Crestwood Junior School - Junior Vocational Annex for Kingsmill Vocational School
2. Grand Avenue Junior School - School for the Mentally Retarded
3. Humber Bay Junior School - Alternative School (an innovative secondary school) and storage for surplus equipment
4. Queensland Junior School - Humber College Campus
5. Queensway Senior School - Humber College Campus

E. Economy and Efficiency of Instructional Units

(i) Board policy re introducing new credits -- "Guidelines Re Class Sizes in Secondary Schools".

(ii) Closing-out options.

(iii) Continuing adult education.

The Interview

Notes taken during the meeting with the Controller of Planning and Plant of the Etobicoke Board were later condensed and reorganized into a question-and-answer format.* This revised transcript appears below.

A. What Method is Used for Projecting Enrolment?

The survival method is used. Individual school patterns are identified and short-term enrolment projections are calculated twice yearly. Assessment data (which indicates children under 5 years of age in each household in the borough) are available every year from the municipal offices. These statistics are tabulated by school districts and fed into long-range projections. We are currently completing long-range (10-year) projections for each school.

Projections formerly made by teaching staff are now calculated by board administrative staff only. Principals are consulted throughout the year for information about their community and they are kept informed of plans for their schools.

Our Controller of Planning and Plant has access to information on areas of the borough which will be redeveloped or which still have open space for future development; he maintains a liaison with borough and Metro planners. The Controller's office has data on file which profile the per-pupil yield from every type of housing: O.H.C., high-rise, low-rise, co-op, limited dividend, etc.

B. What is the Indicator That a School Needs Special Attention?

As enrolment declines, the first stage is usually to pair schools to save administrative costs. Individual spare classrooms may be locked up to reduce heating and caretaking costs. (See document C in the preceding section.) The annual estimated savings for a locked classroom are $1,250. (It is advisable to install new locks and retain the keys since we have found that the caretaker or principal may be pressured from time to time to re-open an empty classroom for a single occasion.) As school enrolment continues to decline, split grades are organized. Ideally, split grades should be organized to benefit the pupils, but when a school's grade enrolment declines beyond a certain point, split grades become the only form of organization, and that form may not be educationally desirable. Also, teachers of split grades in very small schools are less able to carry a full program of extra-curricular student activities. The smaller the school staff, the smaller the pool of talents and resources from which they can draw; and teachers of split classes carry a heavier preparation load. It is at this point that we consider the decision to close.

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* We thank Lorraine Lowe for her time and commendable effort.

C. What Steps Would You Take to Inform the Staff and the Community?

The Controller of Planning and Plant processes the enrolment data and is the source of any recommendation to close a school. A report is prepared for the Executive Committee of the Etobicoke Board, comprised of administrators. The Executive Committee apprises all superintendents of its decision, and a recommendation to the Board of Trustees is prepared. The board considers a motion to close a school in principle. When the motion is passed, Board Policy #39 is implemented.

Board policy states that decisions to close in principle should be made twelve months in advance of the closing date. (Administrative staff would now recommend that this time allowance be increased to eighteen months.) Teaching staff is informed immediately of the board's decision and plans are made for a public meeting in the community. Each household receives an invitation to the public meeting. Parents and the community will at this stage already be aware of the declining enrolment situation through their experiences with pairing of their school, locked empty classrooms in the building, and split grades.

At the public meeting the administration and trustees stress the educational advantages of consolidating schools vs. the disadvantages of organizing a school with too few pupils. We particularly do not calculate the savings of closing a school. At the public meeting, community residents may be given a practical exercise in organizing a school with too few pupils. This is most effective when parents come to realize that their son or daughter might be in split grades (2-way or 3-way splits) for an entire junior school career.

The advisory committee (see Policy #39) can now be set up.

D. When Does the Decision to Close a School Become Firm?

The report of the advisory committee to the trustees would be received in March and the board's recommendation would become effective in June.

E. What Steps Do You Take When Closing a Building?

Ministry guidelines are followed. We are concerned that these would make the building available to many different social agencies whose proposed uses might not be compatible with the neighbourhood or with borough bylaws, and we recognize, too, that it takes a great deal of time to accommodate proposals from all the prescribed agencies which the Ministry would like us to consider.

There are alternate uses which we would like to research. We have requested funding to investigate possibilities beyond the Ministry's own suggestions -- i.e. housing for senior citizens. The architects we consulted had built both seniors' housing and schools and their initial examination of the proposal yielded the opinions that all three levels (junior, middle and secondary) could be converted to housing for seniors at considerable savings over new building construction costs. All requests for funding for such a study have been rejected to date but Etobicoke remains interested in conducting one as soon as funds become available.

F. Do You Have Any Caveats or Success Patterns You Would Recommend?

We would emphasize the necessity for advance notice to the community and a caution against "filling" space in a shrinking school with extra programs. The community becomes accustomed to enjoying the extra programs and doesn't want to give them up to consolidate with another school which does not offer these special extras!

G. Do You See Differences When You Approach Secondary School Closing?

Yes. We have yet to experience this but are already planning ahead for it. We are aware that the closing of a secondary school should not be announced too early or students might exercise their right to optional attendance areas and empty the school even more quickly than anticipated through declining enrolment projections alone. Subject option possibilities are a major concern in a secondary school with decreasing enrolment.

H. What Advice for the Future Would You Give the Following Groups: Parents, Boards, Ministry, and Other Branches of Government?

One year is too short a time to close a school. We would recommend a policy of 18 months. In the case of junior and middle schools, the longer the lead time, the better.

Long-term planning is a must.

The board must be sure of its decision before a public announcement is made.

Public announcements should include accurate enrolment data (past, current and projected) as well as a history of the community's pupils-to-homes factor. A history of the building should also be available. Make statistics available -- maps, board policy on transportation, etc.

The Ministry's "rated capacity" figures have little value in the process of closing a school.

A rigid policy based on a statistical profile would leave little leeway for accommodation of an individual school community's special needs. A minimum of codification has worked well for us.

It is most important to know the community and identify its problems before the public meeting stage. The principal and local residents are the best source of information about the neighbourhood.

It is important to be prepared to justify the decision to close a school with relation to neighbouring schools which are not being closed.

Don't emphasize cash savings since they cannot be returned to the individual community being immediately affected by the closing. Residents with children in the school recognize that they will still be paying similar taxes for dissimilar service. Parents of school-age children need to know that they will receive improved service (in the form of greater educational opportunities for their children) through consolidating schools.

It is most valuable for the administration to have the support of the trustees and for the administrative staff to give trustees every aid, in the form of statistical histories, etc., when they meet the public with their decision.

J. Do You Have Advice for the Ministry or Other Branches of Government?

We would suggest that the Ministry consider a greater variety of alternative uses and a greater flexibility in regard to revenue from other uses. This might mean the difference between being able to generate at least some income from a redundant school and the expensive alternative of "mothballing" that school. Perhaps the Ministry would consider an adjusted fee scale for non-profit organizations, for example, based on their ability to pay.

We note that the Ministry provides for the area board to contact other agencies regarding their use of our redundant space, but are other branches of the government encouraged to solicit area boards with a view to taking over vacant school space before considering capital expenditures on new buildings of their own?

The above recommendations should constitute valuable advice to many a board grappling with various facets (or phases) of decline with particular emphasis on school accommodation issues.

HAMILTON

Accommodation Report (November, 1976)

I. Elementary

1. The September 30, 1976 enrolment statistics are used for projections and recommendations. Based on 1975 and 1976 enrolment figures (Table 1*) in the elementary and secondary panel, and on the assumption that all factors affecting enrolment remain relatively constant, the next 5 years will see ever-increasing declines, probably ranging between 1,100 - 1,400 students annually -- primarily at the elementary level.**

2. Accommodation problems exist in this panel only because the vacant space is not where the students are. This is a problem faced by almost every urban board in Ontario.

   Possible solutions:

   (a) Build schools where now needed

   (b) Build additions in accordance with a uniform policy

   (c) Add portables

   (d) Bus students

Table 2 -- Population by Age Groups as Percentage of Total Population -- illustrates that as the area ages, there is a strong possibility that at a given point in time, one-half of the original accommodation will be required.

Mixed Growth-and-Decline Areas

The most critical problem areas in upper and lower Hamilton -- those that require additions and the use of portables -- are identified and treated in detail.

Problem Areas of Declining Enrolment

Five schools are pinpointed. Enrolment ranges from 64 to 260; compared with operating capacity, the number of students has dropped drastically -- by approximately half, if not more. It

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* Not shown.

** The Hamilton Board has twinned 18 schools to date (December, 1977).

II. Secondary and Secondary (Vocational)

Tables are grouped into (1) secondary (composite) school enrolment (year 1-5), upper and lower Hamilton -- 1975, 1976; (2) secondary school enrolment (year 1) by intake from grade 8, upper and lower Hamilton -- 1975, 1976; and (3) secondary school enrolment by individual schools (as of September 30), upper and lower Hamilton -- 1975, 1976.

Secondary (Composite)

Table #1

Enrolment (Year 1-5)

	1975	1976	Plus or Minus
Upper Hamilton (Year 1-4)	6620	6533	-87
Lower Hamilton (Year 1-4)	8256	8379	+123
Lower Hamilton (Year 5)	815	793	-22
Lower Hamilton (Year 5)	868	840	-28
TOTAL	16,559	16,545	-14

Table #2

Enrolment (Year 1)

Intake from Grade 8

Upper Hamilton	1975	1976
Public Elementary	1430	1363
Separate Elementary	195	213
Others	33	34
Lower Hamilton		
Public Elementary	1606	1699
Separate Elementary	423	466
Others	94	92

Table #3

Secondary School Enrolment By Schools
(as of September 30)

UPPER HAMILTON	1975	1976	LOWER HAMILTON	1975	1976
Barton	1197	1206	Churchill	1334	1267
Hill Park	1214	1273	Delta	1658	1731
MacNab	1132	1229	Glendale	1260	1239
Sherwood	1168	1207	Macdonald	1190	1297
Southmount	617	361	Scott Park	1134	1137
Westmount	1292	1257	Vanier	198	244
			Westdale	1463	1464
TOTALS	6620	6533			
Grade 13	815	793	TOTALS	8237	8379
TOTALS	7435	7326	Grade 13	887	840
			TOTALS	9124	9219

The figures imply that composite secondary school students declined by 14 overall, the largest drop (87 students in years 1-4) occurring in upper Hamilton, while we note an increase of 123 students (years 1-4) in lower Hamilton. The decline of year 5 students is similar in both areas -- 22 in lower Hamilton, and 28 in the upper section of the city. Intake from grade 8 varies by type of elementary school: public, separate, and others. Ninety-three more public elementary pupils were admitted to grade 9 in lower Hamilton in 1976, while upper Hamilton experienced a drop of nearly 70 new grade 9 students from public elementary schools. In both areas of the city, the number of R.C.S.S. students entering grade 9 grew slightly -- by 18 (upper Hamilton) and 43 (lower Hamilton). Grade 9 intake from other (presumably private) schools remained virtually unchanged. Secondary school enrolment (by individual schools) in upper Hamilton reveals a decrease of 109 students from 1975 to 1976, whereas lower Hamilton enrolled 95 more students in 1976 than in the previous year.

The enrolment in the vocational schools has been relatively stable from 1970 (2,105) to 1976 (2,165).

> "There are no recommendations for action in the secondary panel ...at this time. The closing of Sir Wilfrid Laurier* and the use of Southmount as a grade 13 school has meant that all schools but one (Macdonald) are operating at optimal or maximum size. Delta's boundaries may have to be adjusted to relieve its increases. The intake at the grade 9 level is decreasing only from the public school system in upper Hamilton. Therefore, no sharp drop in enrolment is expected on the evidence available.
>
> The vocational schools continue to maintain about the same number each year. Board policies will determine the trend of these enrolments." (Page 8)

III. Schools for the Trainable Retarded and Special Education Classes

Enrolment in the schools for the trainable retarded was 465 in September, 1976 -- up 7 pupils from the year before.

These schools (for trainable retarded pupils) serve children from two other jurisdictions -- the Hamilton-Wentworth R.C.S.S. Board and the Wentworth County Board. Under existing policies, present accommodation should continue to meet the needs over the next few years.

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* This school was transferred to the elementary panel.

In spite of the pattern of lower birth rate and of declining enrolments, the more skillful and positive identification of pupils with serious learning problems -- by teachers, special services staff, local clinics and private physicians -- and particularly pupils with problems of a very complex nature, has contributed to the continuing demand for classes in most of the special areas in order to meet the special needs involved.

A list of Capital Project Priorities (1977-1979) and two tables -- Overall Enrolment (1964-1976), as of September 30, 1976 and Live Births and Enrolment (1960-1976), complete the Hamilton study.

We should like to point out that the Accommodation Report must be seen as an essential first step toward drawing up a plan with respect to surplus school space.

CAPITAL PROJECT PRIORITIES

1977 - 1979

1977

R. A. Riddell Addition
Fire Marshall Requirements

1978

Red Hill Addition
Richard Beasley Addition
Riverdale East New School
Greenhill New School
Hillcrest Renovation

1979

Union School Replacement
Strathcona Replacement
Wentworth Replacement
Queen Mary Gym Addition
W. H. Ballard School Gym

OVERALL ENROLMENT

1964-1976

(as of September 30)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS					SECONDARY SCHOOLS					VOC. SCHOOLS	TRAINABLE RETARDED	TOTAL	INCREASE
YEAR	LOWER	UPPER	TOTAL	INCREASE	GRADES 9 TO 12		GRADE 13	TOTAL	INCREASE				
					Lower	Upper							
1964	21,666*	14,074	35,740	+ 233	8,671	5,132	1,250	15,053	+1119	915	--	51,708	+1581
1965	21,573	14,478	36,051	+ 311	8,905*	5,573	1,472	15,950	+ 897	1,019	—	53,020	+1312
1966	21,457	14,735	36,192*	+ 141	8,873	5,846	1,508	16,227	+ 277	1,123	—	53,542	+ 522
1967	21,335	14,755*	36,090	- 102	8,889	6,335	1,517	16,741	+ 514	1,327	—	54,158	+ 616
1968	20,923	14,622	35,545	- 545	8,873	6,823	1,497	17,193	+ 452	1,608	—	54,346	+ 188
1969	21,066	14,435	35,441	- 104	8,798	7,063	1,535	17,396	+ 203	1,890	307	55,034	+ 688
1970	21,023	14,128	35,151	- 290	8,796	7,180	1,646	17,622*	+ 226	2,105	326	55,204*	+ 170
1971	20,672	13,510	34,182	- 963	8,652	7,189*	1,757	17,598	- 24	2,106	355	54,241	- 963
1972	20,143	13,033	33,176	-1006	8,562	6,947	1,540	17,049	- 549	2,177	391	52,793	-1448
1973	19,423	12,691	32,114	-1062	8,373	6,929	1,435	16,737	- 312	2,220*	421	51,492	-1301
1974	18,675	12,368	31,043	-1071	8,281	6,769	1,339	16,389	- 351	2,154	450*	50,036	-1456
1975	18,158	12,050	30,208	- 835	8,237	6,620	1,702	16,559	+ 170	2,108	458	49,333	- 703
1976	17,405	11,694	29,099	-1109	8,379	6,533	1,633	16,545	- 14	2,165	465	48,274	-1059

* Indicates Peak Enrolment

LIVE BIRTHS AND ENROLMENT

YEAR	POPULATION	NUMBER OF BIRTHS	KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT	ELEMENTARY ENROLMENT	SECONDARY ENROLMENT	BIRTHS PER 1,000 OF POPULATION
1960	263,750	6,820	4,232	34,491	9,718	25.9
1961	266,707	6,678	4,288	34,594	11,269	25.0
1962	269,459	6,480	4,426	34,994	12,510	24.0
1963	273,935	6,379	4,566	35,507	13,934	23.3
1964	277,847	6,358	4,327	35,740	15,053	22.9
1965	283,099	6,015	4,278	36,051	15,950	21.2
1966	285,650	5,720	4,196	36,192	16,227	20.2
1967	291,536	5,604	4,166	36,090	16,741	19.2
1968	293,397	5,620	3,956	35,545	17,193	19.2
1969	296,826	5,617	3,881	35,441	17,396	18.9
1970	297,523	5,282	3,610	35,151	17,622	17.8
1971	303,177	4,750	3,366	34,178	17,598	15.7
1972	305,316	4,019	3,179	33,176	17,049	13.2
1973	305,188	3,885	2,995	32,114	16,737	12.7
1974	306,462	3,902	3,038	31,043	16,389	12.7
1975	311,886	4,796	3,086	30,208	16,559	15.4
1976		(4,077)	2,852	29,099	16,545	15.4

HASTINGS COUNTY

On April 5, 1977 a memorandum regarding Long-Range Plans to Consider the Implications of a Declining System was sent to the Chairman and members of the Hastings County Board of Education from the Office of the Director of Education. In it, the Director and the Superintendent of Instruction pointed out that according to enrolment projections up to 1986, Hastings (along with the majority of Ontario school boards)

> "...will experience a significant drop in enrolment over the next few years. This drop, and correspondingly diminishing resources, will have tremendous implications for all the various groups concerned with the education of our youth. It will be, in all probability, the greatest challenge to face us in the immediate years ahead."

PHASE ONE (Preparation)

Earlier this year a group of administrators from the Hastings, Halton and Lakehead County Boards of Education attended a "think tank" session on the "implications of the declining system". This "think tank" was convened with the acknowledgement that:

1.0 the morale of those who work with children in this and other counties will be severely tested by these implications.

2.0 children benefit from high morale among the staff of a system.

3.0 it was necessary to assess the current readiness level of each system to meet the challenge.

4.0 systems should develop some possible directions preparatory to involving its total staff in similar "think tank" experiences.

A second tri-county think tank composed of trustee, administration, principal and teacher (O.T.F.) representatives will meet again in June, 1977* for a further in-depth examination of implications and directions. Attendance at these two meetings may be considered as Phase One in a Hastings County response to the challenge.

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* Two supplementary "mini-think tanks" were held on April 26 and May 18.

PHASE TWO (Examination)

It is proposed that a task force be struck before June 15, 1977 to begin in September, 1977 --

1.0 an intensive, in-depth and wide-ranging examination of the implications of a declining system with --

  1.1 suggestions or recommendations to assist all concerned to cope more effectively, efficiently and humanly with the recognized problems.

  1.2 the understanding that this task force could, from time to time, co-opt others to assist it in its tasks.

  1.3 the understanding that this task force would, hopefully, produce a FUTURES REPORT containing complete, detailed plans and implementation practices for the system.

It is hoped that the FUTURES REPORT would be available for initial approval, where necessary, by the various groups concerned and for final approval by the Hastings County Board of Education before December 31, 1977.

The task force will be composed of representatives from all teaching and non-teaching staffs, students, trustees, parents, principals, vice-principals and administrative staff. Each group will be asked to very thoughtfully select or elect their representatives. These representatives should possess a high level of human relations, listening and conceptual skills as well as patience, enthusiasm, tolerance and a capacity to "think deeply".

PHASE THREE (Implementation)

It is hoped that the task force will (with co-opted assistance, where necessary) have prepared detailed plans and practices for such topics as mobility, retraining, boundary changes, programs, buildings, etc.

During 1978 and thereafter the system will be able to implement the plans and practices of the report with ongoing evaluation which could lead to emerging alternatives.

A proposal for the Implications of a Changing System Task Force was drawn up. The terms of reference are organized under these headings:

1.0 The Purpose

2.0 The Plan

2.1 Core Committee

- function
- composition
- suggested tasks
- funding
- time lines
- auxiliary committees

A copy of the document is reprinted below.

IMPLICATIONS OF A CHANGING SYSTEM (ICS)

1.0 The Purpose

It is proposed that a task force be struck immediately to consider the implications of a changing system (ICS). This would involve an intensive, in-depth and wide-ranging examination of every area of our County's operation.

The task force will provide: -

1.1 Suggestions and recommendations to assist all concerned to cope more effectively, efficiently and humanly with recognized problems;

1.2 A "Futures Report" containing complete short-term and long-term plans and implementation practices for the system.

2.0 The Plan

2.1 Core Committee:

2.1.1 A Core Committee will be established to represent all the formal forces within the system. This Committee will have initiating, coordinating and recommending powers. It will co-opt representatives of all groups within and without the County that would be able to assist in the consideration of areas of concern.

The Core Committee is essential to the success of the overall comprehensive examination of the effects of declining enrolments in Hastings County. Although, in essence a facilitating group, it will, nevertheless, more than any other group, determine the content of the "Futures Report". It is essential, therefore, that Trustees, Administration, Elementary and Secondary teachers be represented on the Core Committee.

2.1.2 The Formal organizations of the County will comprise the Core Committee as follows:

Trustees	- 1
Administration	- 1
FWTAO	- 1
OPSMTF	- 1
OSSTF	- 2
Elementary Principals' Association	- 1
Secondary Principals' Cabinet	- 1

Note:

The selection of the Core Committee representatives, by the respective organizations, is absolutely crucial. Each group will be asked to select someone possessing a high level of human relations, listening and conceptual skills as well as patience, enthusiasm, tolerance and a capacity to conceptualize.

2.1.3 The Core Committee will:

(a) review the overall implications of declining enrolments and decide upon the major studies that would be a part of the ICS report.

(b) establish auxiliary committees as needed; appoint a chairman and establish the makeup of auxiliary committees. Representatives of the groups to serve on these committees will be selected by the organization concerned.

(c) instruct auxiliary committees to meet and establish their parameters.

(d) receive parameters from auxiliary committees, be aware of possible overlapping and exclusions, review parameters and return final parameters to auxiliary committees.

(e) receive interim reports and final reports from auxiliary committees.

(f) submit all items referred from the negotiating sessions, and included in the auxiliary committee reports, to the appropriate groups for further discussion (e.g. Staff-Board Relations Committee, CBC or EPC Committees).

Note: None of these items, or the final "Futures Report", will be public until the above committees have reached mutual agreement on these items.

(g) prepare a complete "Futures Report" once the items from the Auxiliary Committees' reports (referred to in (f) above) have been received, coordinated and compiled.

2.1.4 Funding

Funding from the Board will be available to enable the Core Committee and Auxiliary Committees to meet outside of regular duties (e.g. teachers will be freed via supply teachers to work during regular hours on these vital matters). This funding will also cover all expenses incurred to enable the committees to function and produce their reports.

Note: The initial outlay is $10,000 with the proviso that further funding will be available as determined by the Core Committee.

2.1.5 Time Lines

The Core Committee will meet as soon as possible (e.g. before May 31st) and establish a practical time-line but will meet the following crucial time points:

- establish auxiliary committees before June 20th
- require final auxiliary committee reports before November 1st
- provide the Trustees, Federations and other parties with a confidential report on recommendations concerning those items referred from negotiations before November 15th.

- receive the results of the above deliberations and complete a "Futures Report" by December 31st.

Note: The procedures and the time-line are designed to have specific practices for implementation within the system during the 1978 calendar year. The practices would be agreed to by all parties and would affect all actions during the crucial 1978 spring term, and beyond. (e.g. T.A.T.)

2.1.6 Auxiliary Committees

These committees, once established, will meet as described in 2.1.4 (above). They will establish the parameters within which they will operate, and:

- submit regular interim reports to the Core Committee; and
- establish mechanisms to obtain input from interested groups; and
- submit a final report before November 1st.

An ICS Task Force Contact Person Workshop was conducted on June 14, 1977. We are rendering an abridged version of the minutes of this meeting.

One of the aspects which E. Runacres, Director of Education, stressed in his opening remarks, was diminishing resources -- "the nub of the problem". He also acknowledged that in Hastings County "the elementary situation may not be as serious as the secondary situation over the next five years; ...(however) the elementary system is not expanding and this in itself will cause similar difficulties as in a declining enrolment situation". About the ICS Task Force, Runacres stated that it would involve all the forces, establish priorities, seek alternative solutions, and propose "pathways of action". Members operate within a framework of definite time-lines: "Direction to our county will be available by December, 1977". The function of the contact person is to:

- be a two-way communication link between staff and the task force
- help the school staffs to know what is going on as well as provide input on staff needs and areas of concern
- propose action/direction to the task force
- monitor the progress of the task force
- make or break the entire process.

E. Shipton, the Superintendent of Instruction (and Core Curriculum Chairman) introduced the ICS Core Committee members. He then presented the initial task of the committee:

- to receive continuous feedback from the system in general and the auxiliary committees
- to maintain an overview of all auxiliary committees
- to maintain momentum of auxiliary committees
- to coordinate efforts of all committees.

One of the core committee members, Rod Uens, the elementary school principal representative, introduced the goals of the contact person workshop:

1. To provide an awareness of the problems of a changing system.
2. To inform of the purpose, responsibilities, etc. of the ICS Task Force and auxiliary committees.
3. To define the role of the contact person.
4. To suggest implementation strategies.
5. To identify barriers to performing the role.

Uens divided the group into 4 small groups, and a brainstorming session on "What Makes a Good System" took place. The results of the brainstorming were divided into these categories: climate, organization, personal qualities, human resources, material, self-satisfaction, growth experiences, general, and other.

Next the members of the group listed individually on cards their thoughts on "Problems in a Changing System". Two steps followed: They shared their views with another member and then brainstormed this topic. Again, results were tabulated under the general headings "Employee" and "System".

The F.W.T.A.O. member of the Core Committee presented the role of the contact person to the group:

1. To generate staff interest.
2. To receive feedback from staff, and provide continuous feedback to the ICS task force.
3. To receive input from ICS, and disseminate to staff.
4. To obtain reaction to further ideas to ICS or auxiliary committee output.

Following this, the workshop participants were divided into 7 groups to discuss -- and comment on -- these headings:

- Additions to the role (of contact personnel)
- Implementing the role
- Barriers to carrying out the role.

The groups' ideas on the above topics were recorded individually. One noteworthy addition to the role is close contact with the community, including students, parents and the media.

In closing the workshop, E. Shipton described some of the basic aspects which the contact person should bear in mind to keep communication lines open.

Rod Uens asked all participants to evaluate the workshop by listing their views on (1) the workshop and (2) the Implications of a Changing System Task Force. Judging from the compendium of comments, it was generally felt that the workshop was "very informative", "productive", "well planned and organized", "enlightening", "worthwhile", and "effective". Five critical observations were made: "it took too long", "left too many unanswered questions", and "caused some degree of mistrust"; "there was too much noise in the brainstorming areas"; and, finally: "I know what I'm doing, but where and when do I start?".

On the task force as a whole, remarks ranged from "great that teachers can give input", "very much needed", "timely" and "valuable" to "the best we can do with only one chance". Only two negative responses were noted: "confusing" and "some concern felt that my involvement will be indirect".

In his letter dated June 20, 1977 to all contact persons, the Core Committee Chairman expressed his appreciation for the "interest and enthusiasm" displayed at the workshop. He particularly thanked Rod Uens for his "Workshop Design" (a copy of which is available at the CODE office). Needless to say, this document was very favourably received.

The letter continued with the announcement that "the Core Committee would be meeting on Tuesday, June 21* to decide upon the composition of auxiliary committees from the list of volunteers". It closed with these fitting remarks: "We have been presented with a great opportunity to move into the future of Hastings with a plan for growth and personal development".

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* Parameters for the committees were set up at this meeting.

LAKEHEAD DISTRICT

I. The Lakehead Board of Education presented to CODE a comprehensive information report (October 10, 1977) which describes briefly the types of activities instituted or proposed to deal with declining enrolment within the board's jurisdiction. The information provided is "simply a beginning to the process of examination of the effects, implications, approaches, and possible solutions for dealing with the human considerations and administrative problems of the shrinking school system".

1. The 2 "tri-county think tanks" (on the motivational needs of the shrinking school system) involving representation from the Hastings County, Halton, and Lakehead District Boards of Education were deemed useful and productive.

2. The board has on file projected enrolments for the elementary and secondary school panels; these are updated annually upon receiving the September 30th enrolment statistics from each school. Data have also been gathered for 1969 to 1976 inclusive, on the rate of gross attrition of teaching staff. By examining the age of academic staff and the number of years of teaching experience, the board has identified potential future retirements. (Projections cover a five-year period.) All data were expected to be assimilated and scrutinized in mid-October to determine the degree of the problem, if any, faced by the Lakehead system over the next 5 years.

3. Process for School Closing

3.1 Alternative Use of School Facilities

The Lakehead Board has approved the following process in considering vacant school space:

(1) Collect information
(2) Analyse the information
(3) Determine the target facilities
(4) Disseminate information
(5) Consult the community
(6) Consult the system forces
(7) Consult the school staffs and students

(8) Receive feedback
(9) Refine and clarify the data
(10) Refine the target facilities
(11) Establish working groups with membership from trustees, administration, the community, the system forces, and the school staffs
(12) Receive recommendations
(13) Establish board policy
(14) Exact administrative decisions.

3.2 Alternative Use of School Space

These are some alternative-use options, emanating out of task force recommendations:

(1) Upgrade present programs
(2) Alter existing school organizational structures
(3) Change school boundaries
(4) Twin schools for various purposes and programs
(5) Establish special-purpose open enrolment schools
(6) Close portions of a facility
(7) Share space with other boards and/or agencies
(8) Develop community use of the facility
(9) Lease available space for income purposes
(10) Close the entire facility and (a) lease (b) sell.

3.3 Collection of Information

The following action plan has been developed in accordance with the initial step in the board's process of determining alternatives for school facilities (reference: 3.1 (1)).

	Action	Responsibility	Time-Line
(1)	Preparation of the functional rated capacity report	J. Peat	completed by October 30
(2)	Preparation of five-year school enrolment projections	J. Peat	completed by November 1
(3)	Definition and description of desirable core facilities	Zone Supts.	completed by November 1
(4)	Preparation of five-year system enrolment	J. Peat	completed by November 15
(5)	Report on cost analysis of each school	F. Poulter	completed by November 15
(6)	Definition and criteria of a community school	J. Smithers	completed by November 15
(7)	Report on the conversion of school space	Zone Supts.	completed by November 15
(8)	Analysis of each school zone in relationship to the "core" definition	Zone Supts.	completed by November 30
(9)	Report on five-year maintenance needs of each school	K. MacKay	completed by November 30
(10)	Report on all available sites	F. Poulter	completed by December 1
(11)	Preparation of the demographic studies report	J. Peat	completed by December 1
(12)	Information from the City of Thunder Bay on future growth projections	J. Peat	completed by December 1
(13)	Relationship between program quality and school size	C. Gehrels + Zone Supts.	completed by December 1
(14)	Analysis of criteria for closing a school	W. Beevor	completed by December 15

4. System Involvement

The Lakehead Board members of the OSSTF have established a committee on declining enrolment, and the elementary federations will be encouraged to do so in the near future.

The first step is a sharing of all up-to-date statistics with the federations and the trustees of the Lakehead Board. The data will be carefully examined as it is felt to be of utmost importance that all forces in the system concur with the base on which future decisions will rest.

A task force consisting of trustees, federation representatives, and administrators will be established. Its purpose will be, in a "think tank" environment, "to generate solutions and action plans which overcome or alleviate potential problems generated by declining enrolment".

5. Administration Team Goals

"To predict declining enrolment and manage the impact in order to make commensurate decreases in costs and services without loss in the quality of education." (page 10)

Through identification of administrative team goals, a goal-outcome statement has been generated for the school year 1977 - 1978. This goal statement indicates some of the activities that administration will be involved in for this school year (1977/78), namely: (1) five-year enrolment projections; (2) assessing the impact of declining enrolment on staffing; (3) identifying space needs in schools; and (4) projecting costs of the collective agreement.

6. Career Planning Resource Team

The Lakehead Board of Education, in cooperation with a number of community agencies, is planning for December a four-day training program in career planning and development for 15 persons from Thunder Bay. It will assist the school system in dealing with alternate careers not only in education, but in the business, industry, and post-secondary constituencies within the board's jurisdiction.

II(a)Memorandum regarding Resources Management Policy Committee (May 16, 1977)

After lengthy discussions of the Alternative Use of Facilities Report and the Consolidation of School Space Report at several meetings of the Resources Management Policy Committee, the following recommendations were made at the special request of the trustees:

1. That the board approve the criteria and process for closure at 5 school facilities.
2. That the board declare the Arthur Street Central School and property surplus to its needs; that appraisals be obtained immediately; and that Ministry approval to sell be obtained immediately, and sale procedures satisfactory to the Ministry be instituted as soon as possible.
3. That the Central School Resource Centre and property be declared surplus to the needs of the board, and that administration be instructed to explore the alternative uses for the property with appropriate personnel of the City of Thunder Bay.
4. That the occupants of 950 Memorial Avenue* be relocated when other suitable space is available and that the property be disposed of at that time at its appraised value.

5&6. That the Lakehead Board of Education approve the closing of Jumbo Gardens and Francis Street schools, effective no later than June 30, 1978.

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* A building containing the audio-visual and film library departments, as well as the board's instructional supplies warehouse.

II(b)Memorandum from the Director of Education to the Chairman and members of The Resources Management Policy Committee with reference to:

Consolidation of School Space (April 25, 1977)

1.0 Introduction

Over a period of several months, the administration presented to the trustees a number of reports relating to enrolment, functional rated capacities, school cost analysis, etc. in order to enable the trustees to arrive at a decision in regard to consolidation of school space. In addition to this, the trustees requested that the administration identify - in priority - schools that could be closed, criteria for school closure, and a possible process by which closure would take place.

2.0 The Situation

The major goal over the next 5 to 7 years must be the reduction of available pupil place. A long-term plan is necessary for effectively reducing available pupil places while retaining high-quality educational programs.

3.0 Criteria for Closure

Trustees must evaluate the adequacy of a school core. Each of the following criteria - not in priority - is to be considered in relationship to identifying a target facility.

3.1 Adequacy of the Core

Determine which programs can be offered; does the building have an adequate library resource centre, special education areas, physical education facilities, staff room, etc.; examine the safety features of the building and site (does it meet fire marshall's future regulations).

3.2 Availability of Space

The trustees have received a report on the functional rated capacity by school and by zone. When a school is identified as a target facility, it is crucial that there is sufficient space in nearby schools to accommodate all of the children in the target facility.

3.3 Cost Analysis

An important issue is the saving generated by the closure of any school building. A complete cost analysis, as well as an estimate of additional costs are required for each target facility in the system. Also included in the criterion is the five-year plant maintenance cost.

3.4 Viability of School Size

There must be sufficient pupils to provide for a viable school organization. Educational concerns arise when triple grades have to be utilized.

4.0 The Process of Closure

The following is a suggested procedure by which the board could identify and phase out a target facility:

4.1 Collect and Analyse Relevant Information

This includes reports on functional rated capacity, projected enrolment, cost analysis and demographics of each school.

4.2 Determine the Target Facilities

The board should determine by board resolution the school(s) that would be closed. It is important that sufficient time is given to phase out the facility adequately.

4.3 Communicating with School Staff

It is very important that the superintendent solicit the assistance of all staff members in phasing out the school. The principal and teachers of the target facility should be assured that their positions are secure within the system.

4.4 Communicating with the Community

Following a decision to close a school, a meeting of all parents will be held in order to share all relevant information. This meeting should take place as soon as possible following the decision to phase out a school. (A possible strategy would be to appoint a small group of parents to work with the superintendent, principal, and school staff.)

4.5 Report of the Superintendent

In working with parents, teachers, and the principal, the superintendent will present to the board a complete report on the phasing out of the facility, including recommendations as to the relocation of students and the transfer of teachers and principals. This report will be presented three months prior to June 30 of the school closing.

4.6 Action of the Receiving Principal and Staff

The receiving principal of redesignated students would visit the parents of these children, invite the students into their new school to visit their new teachers and future classes. This phase of school closure is very important in that it provides students and parents with an awareness and understanding of their new school.

4.7 Disposition of the Facility

The superintendent of the closed facility would prepare recommendations as to future use of the building.

5.0 Conversion of Space

A plan needs to be established whereby the board may systematically reduce available spaces over the next three to five years. The board should establish a target of available spaces needed to provide program flexibility. Affordable available space in the board's schools could be pegged at 10% of the functional rated capacity.

The board may consider the suggestions cited below in reaching its goal of reducing available pupil places:

5.1 Conversion of Space to Improve School Program

Available spaces could be reduced by up to 700 pupil places. The administration will be able to provide a five-year conversion program to the board by November 1, 1977.

5.2 Conversion of Space for Community Use

Where possible, the Lakehead Board has allowed a number of community groups to utilize vacant school space. Trustees should be aware that this is a viable alternative to reduce available pupil places.

5.3 Consolidation of Space

Small, rural schools in the board's jurisdiction have limited core facilities and small enrolments, which limits the programs available to these students. The board should initiate discussions with the Ministry to provide adequate school facilities in some of its rural areas. If some of these smaller schools can be consolidated, the board could reduce unused space by approximately 350 pupil places.

5.4 New Programs

Through the extension of the JK program, available pupil places have been reduced by 100. In the future, extension of programs in French, continuing education, and outdoor education would further reduce the amount of unused space.

5.5 Phasing Out of Schools

Each year the trustees must make decisions on decreasing available spaces, based on all relevant information supplied by the board. The administration will provide in 1977/78 updated reports containing functional rated capacity, five-year enrolment projections, and demographic studies.

With the phasing out of Francis Public School and Jumbo Gardens Public School, the board will have reduced by 610 available spaces.

c. Appendices A to E: Case Studies

The 5 properties to be disposed of are analysed in detail. (See recommendations in II(a))

A brief history of the school sites is outlined at the beginning, describing the physical condition of the building, as well as the reasons(s) for considering the facility undesirable and/or unsafe. (One school has only been used sporadically since 1974, and was deserted in 1976; another one would have required extensive renovation -- to name two examples.)

Three main headings are discerned in Appendices D and E: (1) Adequacy of Core, (2) Availability of Space, and (3) Cost Analysis. The first category is subdivided into "Space" (inadequate or substandard rooms), and "Site" (safety factor -- traffic, fencing, etc.). Availability of Space looks at (i) rated capacity, (ii) current and projected enrolment in both the target facility and the surrounding schools, and (iii) available space in the latter. "Proximity of Surrounding Schools" and "Transportation Required" are examined subsequently under (2).

Included in Cost Analysis are "Present Costs", "Projected Maintenance Cost", "Potential Additional Costs", and "Potential Annual Savings by Closure".

The information presented in this last segment (Appendices A to E) was revised by the board on May 10, 1977.

LINCOLN COUNTY

In his address to the O.A.E.A.O. Conference on September 22/23, 1977, G.R. Allan, the Director of Education, referred to the ramifications of declining enrolments. A copy of his paper was made available to CODE.

Judging from the opening remarks, declining enrolment has not been as visible in Lincoln as it has in other systems: "It has been our experience that the normal attrition in the elementary school teaching force, and the decreasing pupil/teacher ratio, particularly in the primary grades, has ameliorated the problem and, indeed, has solved it for all intents and purposes."

School closure was one of the items mentioned.

As a result of declining enrolment in the past 6 years, the Lincoln Board has closed 7 schools of varying sizes (from 2 to 15 rooms). Although there is no written policy, these basic understandings are adhered to:

1. It is a two-year process: notification one year, closing the next.
2. The board does not close a school without the agreement and support of the principal ("even if we have to move one").
3. Alternative (preferably educational) use must be identified before closing schools.
4. The closing process consists of 4 steps:
   (a) Approval by senior administration on recommendation of planning proposal.
   (b) Approval by the board's planning committee.
   (c) Public meetings with projects and uses.
   (d) Debate and decision by the board.

The Lincoln Board has twinned 8 schools with 4 principals. This has, to date, only been done for educational reasons, usually by organizing 2 schools (K-8) under one principal.

Declining enrolment now enters the secondary panel as the Ministry projections indicate.

Allan's final words were directed at close cooperation between neighbouring jurisdictions. "I wonder, of course -- can we trust each other? I think we will have to in the very near future." (Page 8)

SAULT STE. MARIE DISTRICT R.C.S.S.

Two reports have been prepared by this board:

I. A thorough, recently completed study entitled "Declining Enrolments in Elementary Separate Schools During the Period from September, 1969 to September, 1981".

II. Some literature under the heading "Practices to be Followed in Closing Schools and Classrooms in Future Years". This material apparently forms part of a report which was prepared in 1976 -- "Operation of the Sault Ste. Marie Separate School System". The school board studied the proposals but did not formally approve them; therefore, the study cannot be regarded as part of the board's policies. However, the practices included here "have been followed during the past several years".[9]

I. Declining Enrolments in Elementary Separate Schools (September, 1969 to September, 1981) (Summary)

It seems that board enrolment will be declining by 956 students between 1977 and 1981. This represents an average of 239 students in each of the next 4 years.

The present report shows a total decrease of 1,030 students in the period from 1969 to 1977, with the average drop each year being 128 pupils. An estimated further decrease of 956 students is expected in the period from 1977 to 1981. This would bring the total to 1,986.

It is anticipated that the enrolment from kindergarten to grade 10 will stabilize in September, 1982 -- assuming that the number of births in the community remains fairly constant.

Between 1969 and 1977, the enrolment in grades 9 and 10 of the 2 local Catholic secondary schools increased from 430 to 717, a total of 287. This fact has reduced the total overall decline in enrolment in the school system.

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[9] Board letter to CODE, dated September 14, 1977.

II. Practices to be Followed in Closing Schools and Classrooms in Future Years (1976)

The board feels it would be highly desirable, if it were possible to determine with accuracy the number of classrooms, and the names and number of schools which it should consider closing in the next 5 years or so. Two major difficulties experienced are fluctuating kindergarten enrolment and the constant shift in population.

Since 1969, 2 schools have been closed, and it is anticipated that 2 or 3 more schools will be recommended for closing within the next 5 years.

Among the factors to be considered before making such a recommendation are the location of the school and the inconvenience which will result to the students who attend it. In the board's experience, minimal opposition was voiced when closing a facility meant that pupils would not be required to walk more than a few additional blocks to their new school.

Schools which are located in high-density core areas of the city where there are neighbourhood schools in close proximity appear to be logical selections when contemplating school closure.

Schools in somewhat isolated zones "should be maintained as long as there are sufficient students for a viable operation. It is apparent that there will be more so-called split grades in order to operate many of these schools economically."

Remote schools to which practically all students are already transported can usually be closed without causing severe inconvenience to anyone. The distance is merely extended.

Schools where there exists a growth potential should be retained as long as possible, even if the present enrolment trend does not indicate an immediate increase.

Other Factors to be Considered When Contemplating the Closing of a School.

(a) Costs

A detailed breakdown of fixed and variable costs for the operation of a school should include staff salaries, plant maintenance and operating costs, required renovation costs, costs of supplies and equipment, and transportation costs, if applicable.

(b) Viability of the Operation of a School

Any K to 8 school with fewer than a minimum of five classrooms would not generally be considered practical in a city the size of Sault Ste. Marie -- unless it was designated a primary or senior school. As an alternative to closing an entire building, the board may consider the closure of a section of the school, and thus have a workable school with fewer than five classrooms.

(c) Relocation of Students

One or more schools may be proposed as alternative accommodation. A detailed study of any additional costs which this relocation might entail should be prepared. The distances which students are required to walk, facilities and programs to be offered in the new school must be examined. These should be at least as good as those in the school considered for closure.

(d) Transfer of Staff

Cooperation of the staff is very important in the school closing procedure. Closure may be facilitated if popular teachers transfer to the same school(s) as the pupils. Every attempt will be made to offer staff members similar positions within the system.

(e) Consultation With the Community

During the closing of the two schools, as stated earlier, opposition was encountered from the parents. The board may anticipate more overt resistance with the eventual phasing out of additional schools.

(f) Disposition of Building and Grounds

Ministry of Education regulations are applied to the disposition of school buildings and sites. If government or municipal bodies have no use for the building, it may be disposed of by the board -- with the approval of the Ministry. Few school boards have chosen to sell their buildings. Literature on this topic reveals that much conflict has been encountered by some boards because of the proposed use of the abandoned facility.

Closing of Classrooms and Schools

Board policy states that when the average enrolment per regular classroom in a school is under 25 students, this fact will be brought to the board's attention for its decision on the number of classrooms to be operated.

The author(s) (of the report) hesitate(s) "to recommend a policy regarding the closing of schools, since each situation is almost unique". "But if we were to carry the policy concerning the closure of classrooms to its logical conclusion, we would consider the closing of a school if its enrolment per classroom were under an average of 25 students." The following other factors would have to be considered:

- cost of operating and maintaining the school
- viability of its operation
- relocation of students
- staff transfer
- consultation with the community
- disposition of buildings and grounds

In the past, before an annnouncement to the general public was made, the board passed a resolution to the effect that it approved the principle of closing the school. Staff members were later advised of the reasons for this decision. Their response was heard and discussed. Then the parents were informed of the proposal.

Conclusion

Since frequently much resistance and sometimes hostility result from a school board's decision to close an educational facility, the question arises whether the anticipated reduction in operating costs compensates for the parental opposition and inconvenience to pupils and academic staff.

Similarly, the closing of a single classroom often results in one or more split grades and the transfer of a teacher. Yet the number of staff must be gradually reduced if the board is to avoid severe financial difficulties.

Although the closure of an entire school is much more comlicated in its effects than the reduction of one or two classrooms, the phasing out of certain schools should be viewed as the logical outcome of classroom closings: one advantage in evidence is a considerable financial saving effected by terminating the operation of a school.

"Would not the reduction in the number of consultants (i.e. music or art), of specialist teachers, or the termination of certain programs such as speech correction be much less painful?" the report asks. Very few parents would be directly affected; consequently, the board would not be subjected to direct opposition initially. But if this practice were continued, the board would ultimately be forced to ask itself whether it is providing its students with an adequate program, and whether they are receiving educational opportunities comparable to those of other school systems.

However undesirable and unpleasant the task of school closure may be, "it appears that most school boards in Ontario must face this reality".

WINDSOR

During 1976 the Windsor Board of Education approved the formation of a Declining Enrolment Committee, consisting of the following members: 5 community representatives; 1 City of Windsor nominee; 2 representatives of the O.S.S.T.F., and 1 each of the O.P.S.M.T.F. and the F.W.T.A.O.; 2 vice-principals; 1 principal; 3 board officials, including the chairman; and 4 trustees.

The committee began its task in September of 1976, and worked in full committee and sub-committee to formulate, for the board's consideration, a report on declining enrolment in the elementary schools.

I. Where Have All the Children Gone? (February, 1977)

Public Elementary school enrolments in Windsor have shrunk by approximately 4,000 pupils since 1969, and are projected to decline approximately 1,800 more pupils from 1977 through 1979.

The peak enrolment of 13,531 at the secondary level occurred in 1971 and had dipped by about 700 pupils between then and 1976. Enrolments will drop a further 2,500 pupils between 1977 and 1982.

During the past several years, the Windsor Board of Education closed 2 public and 2 secondary schools, with one of the latter now serving the needs of the mentally-retarded school-age population.

A further factor affecting enrolment problems must be noted, and that is the rapid shift of population within the city to the outlying areas, where the board was forced to construct new facilities. At a time when some of the area, notably south Windsor, were maturing and schools were emptying, other sections were undergoing rapid growth with young families. The mushrooming villages of Riverside subdivision, for example, contain more preschool children than those of public school age (186 to 169 as of November, 1976, according to a regional assessment office census).

Ministry of Education materials and reports from other school boards and professional organizations on declining enrolments were obtained and critically analysed. In addition, the committee made a study of:

1. Future development plans for the various school attendance areas.

   The City of Windsor planning department provided detailed information and support documents dealing with proposed developments, land assembly programs, and city population trends. It appears that major growth and pressure on school facilities will continue in the east end, and school population in all other areas will further decline.

2. Educational adequacy.

   Diversity of programs possible within an adequate school population was explored, as well as the constraints necessary when the number of children per grade level and the resulting number of teachers shrink below a certain level.

   Given that, among other stipulations, triple gradings within one classroom should be avoided, it was agreed that a K to 6 school may operate at less than optimum efficiency if the enrolment drops to approximately 175 and that for an efficient K to 8 school, a minimum enrolment of approximately 225 would be required.

   Area superintendents then reviewed each elementary school from the aspect of educational adequacy, taking into consideration such particulars as: school library, gymnasium, kindergarten, playground, other specialized teaching areas, lunchroom facilities, office and staffroom, corridors, washrooms, lighting, ventilation, storage. This information was, of course, shared with other committee members.

3. The buildings and their state of repair including electrical, heating, roofing, and anticipated capital expenditures.

   The board's maintenance and caretaking departments reviewed all schools in the system from the standpoint of present condition, maintenance demands, ease of care and cost of future capital improvements. Discussion by committee members followed.

4. Average costs per pupil.

The business office prepared information regarding costs in connection with salaries, supplies, and utilities. Average per-pupil costs were analysed by the committee.

5. Traffic and safety factors.

All elementary school principals submitted a rating on a scale from 1 to 5 (poor to excellent) for their schools. This survey reflected the principals' opinions regarding dangers presented to children in getting to and from school.

As a result of intensive information gathering, analysis, study and discussion, the Declining Enrolment Committee made itemized recommendations, several of which pertain specifically to school facilities and alternative strategies.

1. The foregoing five factors are to be considered when approaching declining enrolment within a school attendance area.
2. During October/November of each year, the board administration should review school enrolment statistics. A list of schools requiring further study shall be submitted to the trustees on or before the board's second November meeting.
3. If the board deems that in any individual case further study (to assess a school's educational effectiveness) is necessary, a School District Study Committee, comprising representatives from the school staff, community, administration and board, shall be established to investigate the viability of the unit by studying the factors outlined in recommendation 1. This committee shall develop the most feasible alternatives for the school from those suggested in recommendation 4, and shall outline its proposals to the board by March 30 or as requested. Following the committee's report and prior to making any decision regarding school closing, the board will arrange, in the school under study, a meeting with concerned parents.
4. Options to be investigated when confronting the problem of declining enrolment within a school include:
   - (i) Adjust attendance area boundaries.
   - (ii) Transport students.

(iii) Supplement programs in schools which do not meet the desired standards.

(iv) Establish split classes (but avoid triple gradings within one classroom).

(v) Use vacant classroom space for other needs of the public education system -- e.g. special education programs, adult education, decentralization of administrative offices, storage, etc.

(vi) Lease or share vacant classroom space in order to obtain revenue and/or share maintenance costs, where compatibility with the continuing operation of the school unit permits, in the following order of priority (in accordance with Ministry of Education guidelines):

  (a) use of accommodation of students of the separate school board or other non-profit schools
  (b) use for needs of the publicly supported post-secondary educational system
  (c) use for needs of the community (e.g. community centres, libraries, day care centres, etc.)
  (d) use for the needs of other government agencies
  (e) use for the needs of the private sector.

(vii) Close one or more classrooms.

(viii) Close the school and transfer students and staff; attempt to use the building in a method outlined in (v) and (vi) above.

5. The Windsor Board shall produce a booklet on Declining Enrolment Guidelines, outlining the factors to consider, the alternatives and the process involved in closing an elementary or secondary school.

6. The Declining Enrolment Committee will subsequently investigate, and make recommendations on, the ramifications of declining enrolment in the secondary panel.

We are rendering a copy of the highlights of the Declining Enrolment Committee Report for quick reference:

A. Facts

1. Public elementary enrolments have declined by 4,000 pupils from 1969 to 1976.
2. Public elementary enrolments are projected to decline by a further 1,800 pupils by 1979.
3. Public secondary enrolments have declined by 700 pupils from 1971 to 1976.
4. Public secondary enrolments are projected to decline by a further 2,500 pupils by 1982.
5. Declining enrolments are jeopardizing the quality of the programs in some elementary schools.
6. Declining enrolments have not yet made an impact at the secondary school level.

B. Danger Signals For Individual Schools

1. Enrolment less than 175 in K-6 schools.
2. Enrolment less than 225 in K-8 schools.
3. Enrolment is 60% or less of efficient capacity.
4. A large ratio of split or multi-grade classes.
5. Limited facilities for specialized activities.
6. High per-pupil operating costs.
7. Enrolment fails to justify scheduled maintenance costs.
8. Limited new housing in area.

C. Possible Solutions

1. Supplement programs in schools which do not meet the desired standards.
2. Adjust attendance area boundaries.
3. Transport students.
4. Close classrooms.
5. Lease vacant space in order to obtain revenue.
6. Share accommodation with another board.
7. Close school and transfer students and staff.

D. School District Study Committee

1. Principal or designate.
2. Staff representative.
3. Area superintendent or designate.
4. The trustee for the ward in which the school is located.
5. Three persons representing the community.

E. Procedure

1. School District Study Committee established by board.
2. Committee reviews all factors and investigates alternatives.
3. Committee presents recommendations to board.
4. Board makes final decision.

II. School District Study Committees

Combined Report

John O. Cahill - Oakwood Public Schools

In accordance with the procedures suggested in the Declining Enrolment Committee report, and approved by the Windsor Board of Education on February 23, 1977, a community meeting was held at John O. Cahill School early in March to discuss the low enrolment situation occurring at the school. Three representatives of the school community were elected to serve on a district study committee. A similar meeting took place at Oakwood: 3 parent representatives were duly elected by those present. (In addition to the 3 parent representatives, each committee comprised a staff member, the school principal, the trustee from Ward 8, and the area superintendent. Because some pupils from Ward 5 attended one school, the trustee from that ward also served on the Cahill Committee.)

After meeting separately to review pertinent information and to study practical operational alternatives, both committees decided to debate mutual problems with a view to arriving at a common solution. A joint meeting was held at Oakwood School on March 31, 1977.

The combined report summarizes (1) the investigations of these two committees, and (2) their recommendations which represent the outcome of joint deliberations.

We are reproducing here the suggested format of the report to the Windsor Board:

SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDY COMMITTEES OF DECLINING ENROLMENT SUGGESTED FORMAT OF REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

A. Description of Problem:

1. Five-year projections
2. Planning Department information
    (a) Census figures
    (b) Potential development (industrial, residential, arterial)

B. Solutions Explored

C. Advantages and Disadvantages of "B" above

D. Solution(s) Recommended:

1. What action?
2. What date?

E. Effects of Implementation:

1. Educational program
2. Cost of operation
    (a) Reductions
    (b) Increases
    (c) Net

F. Other Considerations:

1. Redundant staff positions
2. Re-assignment of staff
3. Orientation of pupils and parents

G. Alternate Uses of Closed Facilities

H. Names and Affiliation of Committee Members

I. Appendices:

1. Minority reports or opinions
2. Census reports
3. Subdivision plans;
    floor plans, etc.

(A complete copy can be obtained from the CODE office.)

NEW YORK STATE

Enrollment Trends: Programs for the Future. A Planning Guide for Districts with Declining Enrollments. (Albany: 1976)*

This thoroughly researched and well-grounded document** addresses school district officials in New York State, apprising them of adequate and creative measures needed to cope with the declining enrolment phenomenon. Since the issue of dwindling student numbers is a universal one, we feel that the information provided by the USNY team can apply equally to many school boards in Ontario - in fact, greatly benefit them. We shall examine the chapter dealing with school facilities in detail for our purposes: (Section VI) Analysis of Facility Needs.

A comprehensive review of programs must be completed before physical facilities (present and future) and staff needs are reviewed. "The number and kinds of classrooms which a district needs relate directly to its philosophy, program objectives, building organization, class size policy, teacher work load, and (required) support personnel." (Page 37). (Section IV pointed out that these factors themselves undergo change due to in- and out-migration and other trends.)

Building adequacy must be studied in the context of (1) general and (2) specific criteria. Such items as ventilation, light, heat, and fire and safety standards fall under the general category - as does the adequacy of space for gymnasia, library media centres, learning resource rooms, and storage areas. Older buildings, for example, may lack storage space for large quantities of audio-visual, physical education, science and mathematics equipment used in modern programs.

Effects upon pupils attending schools designated for closure are considered among specific points of review that must be taken into account:

1. Increased number of students to be transported.

   A prime consideration as to which facility to be eliminated in a school consolidation program is the number of students who would have to be bused should any particular school be closed. Therefore, transportation requirements should be analysed as part of the decision-making process.

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* We thank John J. Murphy, Director, Division of ESC, Planning Field Services, The State Education Department, (USNY, Albany) for authorizing CODE to use this publication as a case study.

** Which we accessed through the ERIC Reproduction Service (EDRS).

2. Distance and time required for transportation.

   Transportation patterns which result in children passing operating schools in order to attend other schools are difficult for the community to accept, and are basically inefficient. It is best to move the least number of children the shortest distance possible.

3. Degree of fragmentation created.

   Wherever possible, whole school populations should be moved as a unit. Much community opposition is generated by splitting or fragmenting the student population of a "doomed" facility.

4. Ability to assure single move during elementary years of attending school.

   In any school consolidation plan, assurance must be given that children will not again be moved during their elementary years. The possibility of further closings in the future must be weighed. Long-range planning is, therefore, desirable prior to reaching any decision with regard to the relocation of children.

The physical structure of buildings is another special criterion for analysing facility needs.

1. Age, condition, efficiency and cost of maintaining buildings.

   One of the major advantages of school consolidation can be realized by long-term cost savings resulting from closing those facilities which will require the most maintenance, repair, and non-educational operating expense.

2. Adequacy of space.

Certain types of facilities (gymnasia, all-purpose rooms, stages, etc.) are either impossible or extremely costly to obtain by converting surplus classroom space. District-wide facilities must, therefore, be analysed in relation to these specialized use requirements.

3. Consideration of location of buildings.

As part of the decision-making process, it is necessary to consider the following factors:

(a) ease of access
(b) zoning and adjacent zoning
(c) distance from present and future population centres
(d) the potential of the building to be attractive to buyers
(e) possible alternative uses.

Alternative Plans for School Consolidation

It is advisable to develop alternative plans for consolidation patterned on the previously established guidelines. In addition to providing flexibility, these varied approaches in initial considerations allow for comparison and analysis by board members as to the advantages and disadvantages associated with each plan.

Examples of alternatives include: (a) pairing or twinning of elementary schools, (b) single-grade schools, (c) reorganization of grade level breakdown*, (d) middle school organization, (e) 9-12 (13 in Ontario) high school, (f) 7-9 junior high school. These options must be consistent with the board's philosophy and goals, before they can be further explored as a framework for school consolidation.

Financial Implications of School Consolidation

The board of education must be very precise in presenting the analysis of the savings accruing from such a consolidation plan. It is recommended that a chart be drawn up to identify specifically the reduction in cost from the operating school budget on an item-by-item basis, so that the individual community resident (and taxpayer) may refer back to the school budget and compare the amount cited as being saved against the reduction of positions, reduced operating costs in building, and reduced transportation costs, if any.

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* The educational planning committee of the Kenora District Board of Education proposed a tri-level structuring in an attempt to consolidate schools. Grade levels are to be reorganized as follows: (1) K to 7; (2) Grades 8 and 9; and (3) Grades 10 to 13.

Increased costs should be clearly identified. Such costs might reflect increased transportation, maintenance of a closed facility which is neither leased nor sold, modifications to buildings to be used for other purposes, and any cost associated with the retraining of staff.

In developing the total net savings, it is wise to make available to community groups both the information and the basis on which it was developed. Very often, verification by an accounting or finance expert in the community will work wonders in convincing concerned parents and other residents.

Alternative Possibilities for Use and/or Disposal of Surplus Buildings

Long before such a decision to close schools is made, it is important that the board of education consider various alternative uses for the surplus school buildings. Four general possibilities are discussed: sale of building; leasing of the building; use of the building for an alternate educational program (with emphasis on multi-use); and mothballing the school for future use.

Sale of the building.

If a building is to be sold, ten steps* must be followed:

1. The school attorney should be contacted and asked to develop a formal opinion regarding the legal requirements for the sale of a surplus school building. It is recommended further that the school attorney make a formal presentation to both the board of education and the chief school administrator outlining requirements which must be satisfied prior to the sale.

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* Many of these do not apply in Ontario, but do reflect the method used in another jurisdiction.

2. Again with the advice of the school attorney, the means by which the board of education will sell the surplus building must be determined. The board may act on its own in disposing of a school building no longer needed as an educational facility as long as a fair market value is received, and the requirement is met that the school has not been used for instructional purposes for a period of five years. On the other hand, the board may decide to seek a referendum of the public in order to determine whether the building should be sold.

3. The district has a choice under the Education Law of how the funds received from the sale of such surplus building may be used. Such funds may be:

   (a) utilized for existing bonded indebtedness,
   (b) applied to construction, reconstruction, or renovation within the district, and
   (c) applied to the general fund of the district.

4. The chief school administrator should secure a valid real estate appraisal of the school building from a qualified appraiser. A new survey should also be taken of any property which will be sold along with the building, so that there can be no question of ownership or boundary lines at the time of the sale. The school attorney should work closely with the chief administrator.

5. If zoning requirements limit the type of sale, and if it is possible to secure a more favourable zoning for the building and appropriate property which is to be sold, it is wise for the school district to request this change prior to offering the building for sale.

6. Meetings with individual community groups are recommended so that the chief school administrator and the board of education can receive indput before the actual sale of the building takes place. These groups should include residents of the immediate neighbourhood, the Chamber of Commerce, PTA (Home-and-School) groups, civic associations, and depending upon the age of the school, possibly the local historical society. One

important consideration might come out of such discussion: the establishment of a restrictive covenant in the deed of sale, so that the nature of the building, physical appearance, etc. might be preserved.

7. The proposed sale of the surplus school building should be advertised widely in newspapers, periodicals, and, most important, trade journals and business reviews. Often local business firms or branches of large corporations need additional space, and would be willing to utilize vacant school buildings -- if the zoning permits.

8. Prospective buyers must be invited to visit the surplus building; administrative staff members should supply all necessary information, supplemented by a layout sketch, detailed plan, and a general knowledge of the building's physical condition.

9. It is recommended that the building be advertised publicly and that sealed tenders be received. A public disclosure is important at the designated time and place, after the bids are opened. The board of education can reserve the right to reject any or all bids if, in its opinion, the sale of the building to a particular bidder would not be in the interest of the community.

10. Once a satisfactory bidder has been accepted, the chief school administrator should prepare a news release describing the sale -- the amount of the proceeds, how these funds will be used, to whom the building has been sold and for what purpose, and the date of occupancy.

Leasing.

The following steps should be taken:

1. The chief school administrator, in consultation with the school attorney, should review sections of the Education Law which deal with the leasing of school buildings. Property not required for educational purposes can be leased, provided that the board determines that leasing is in the best interest of

the community. No outside approval is required. However, the lease must provide for a fair market rental, the term may not exceed five years and must be cancellable by either party on a year's notice, and the lessee must be obligated to restore the property. The lease may be renewed for a period of up to 5 years. If the property is to be leased to a political organization for its lawful purposes or to a non-profit corporation for purposes relating to youth, the requirement for fair market rental or the cancellation proviso do not apply.

2. If the current zoning of the building is for residential purposes, the only eligible tenants are another non-profit educational institution or a division of, say, municipal government. There is tremendous competition for this type of tenant. If it would be possible to have the zoning changed, the choice of lessees could be broadened.

3. Once a particular tenant is secured, the lease must be carefully drawn, meeting the specified requirements of Section 403a of the Education Law. (This does not apply in Ontario, of course.)

4. It is recommended that before any final determination of the tenant is made by the board of education, full and ample opportunity be given at local community meetings to inform residents of the nature of the tenant's activities.

Multi-use of buildings.

Some suggestions for alternate education uses of the building include:

1. Many schools have used surplus buildings for alternate educational purposes. One of the best references in this regard is the publication Fewer Pupils/ Surplus Space. (Educational Facilities Laboratories)[10]

2. A number of school districts throughout New York State have used surplus elementary school buildings for high school programs.

3. A number of school districts have secured multiple tenants for a surplus school building. One example of this is a district which has divided the space 3 ways in an elementary school. One section of the building houses the central administration of the district; the second section supplies space for the Music and Art Foundation, a non-profit group which provides cultural enjoyment for young people; and a third section is used by a non-profit group conducting an instructional gymnastics program available to residents throughout the community. Obviously, there are a number of compatible groups who may want to lease only part of a building.

4. One consideration that needs more investigation is the possibility of converting surplus school buildings to apartment buildings for either very young families or senior citizens. A study is currently underway which is considering the feasibility of making such conversions and allowing such buildings to be used for senior citizen housing.* It is a direction worth pursuing.

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[10] Two other EFL publications have appeared since then which, in our opinion, school boards should find even more valuable: (1) Surplus School Space: Options and Opportunities (1976) and (2) The Secondary School: Reduction, Renewal, and Real Estate (1976). Both references are listed in the last chapter.

* In Ontario, at least one board (Etobicoke) is considering - and planning for - this possibility. A similar study will be conducted as soon as funds become available.

5. Where applicable, the historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural character of the school building must be preserved. Generally, adverse effects occur under conditions which include but are not limited to:

   (a) Destruction or alteration of all or part of a property
   (b) Isolation from, or alteration of, its surrounding environment
   (c) Introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the property or alter its setting
   (d) Neglect of a property resulting in deterioration or destruction.

Mothballing.

When the board of education finds that it either does not wish to (or cannot) sell or lease the surplus building or use it for alternate educational purposes, it should consider mothballing the school. This should be done with the least continuing operating cost for heat and electricity, and with provision for preventing vandalism. It is suggested that the building not be left completely unoccupied but rather that a minimum number of people be kept, perhaps one office operating out of that building, so that it does not become a prime target for vandals. This, it would seem, is the least desirable option but sometimes it may be the only choice. Board officials who decide to close a building are urged to review the checklist for "mothballing" (Appendix C of the New York State document) which appears separately at the end of Chapter II(A).

Other chapters in this highly recommendable pamphlet are entitled "Overview", "Projecting Enrolments", "Approving a Study Strategy", "Program", "Analysing Staff Needs", and "Fiscal Resources".

In a growing system mistakes are easily corrected; in a declining one they are not. A school board that does not plan in advance cannot manage events and will soon be overcome by them. This publication suggests ways to cushion the severity of the impact of decline. It proposes actions senior school administrators can take to carry out the task of conducting background studies for board decision-making; in short, it assists them in meeting their responsibilities as chief advisors to the boards of education.

APPENDIX A

CLOSING SCHOOL

MOTHBALLING*

Move out students and teachers. Arrange for boxes and moving of requested items.

Equipment:

Teaching: Books, paper, science, arts, desks, chairs, maps, books, boards, etc. Move to other schools for use as directed, or to Central Supply for use. Leave no paper goods, books, etc. in school. Keep moving record of all items for inventory.

Custodial, cafeteria, maintenance, nursing: Move to other buildings where they can be used. Keep moving record for inventory.

Remainder of equipment: Select a classroom or larger area, near or with outside entrance, for future moving. Inventory and store all remaining equipment by size, item, or category, for future removal or sale.

Plumbing:

Drain entire building.
Remove well pump from hole (schools with own wells).
Turn off street water at curb and remove water meter shut off valve.
Remove all valve and faucet stems and tie to valve or faucet.
Remove all flushometers, tie to urinal or toilet.
Disconnect or cut piping wherever water trap is suspected.
Blow all lines under air pressure.
Remove all sink traps or remove drain plugs from traps.
Tie plug or trap to sink.
Remove all shower control valves.
Drain all free-standing drinking fountains and disconnect.
Syphon all urinals and toilets, floor and main traps.
Anti-freeze all urinals, toilets, floor and main traps.
Syphon or sponge all toilet tanks dry. Remove ball cock valve.

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* Developed by sub-committee to the Advisory Committee to the Division of Educational Facilities Planning.

Leave in tank.
Plaster fill all urinal and toilet drain openings by cutting cardboard to size of opening and plaster of paris ½" on top.
Anti-freeze wall drinking fountains and plaster fill.

Fire Systems:

1. Stand pipe - Dry systems only connected to fire department outside siamese connection, can be left intact.
2. Stand pipe - Wet systems connected to internal water supply with outside fire department siamese connection. Drain system. Disconnect system from internal water supply and plug, leaving remaining system intact with outside fire department siamese connected ready for hook-up as a dry system (notify local fire protection of this change).
3. Stand pipe - Wet system with own water supply and outside fire department siamese connection. (Same as Item 2). Shut street supply valve at curb, or at source of supply.
4. Stand pipe - Wet system without fire department outside connection, completely drain and disconnect system (notify local fire protection of change).
5. Sprinkler - Dry system air pressured. System can be left in service. Supply water lines to and main pneumatic valve must be protected from freezing.
6. Sprinkler - Wet system. System can be converted to dry system and kept in service (per item 5) with notification to fire protection agency. If not converted, drain entire system:
    a. Close main valve at water source external of building.
    b. Disconnect electric, pressure or flow signal devices.
    c. Open valve drains where available.
    d. As each floor, floor section or building area is check valved, they must be treated as individual sections and drained separately.
    e. If all check valves can be opened manually, open and drain bottom to top of system. If not, then drain top section to bottom section.
    f. Sprinkler heads and sections of piping will possibly have to be removed where water traps are likely.
    g. Remove checks from all check valves.
    h. Blow out all lines with air.
    i. Notify fire protection agency that system is inoperable.

7. Fire detection systems. Leave system intact. If possible, have wired directly to fire protection agency dispatcher. If not possible, have both internal and external sounding building bells.

Heating:

1. Secure electric to all heating equipment: burners, controls, compressors, pumps, fans, HVAC units.
2. Secure main water supply. Disconnect water feeds from boiler.
3. Drain boilers and entire heating system, using basically the same procedure as in plumbing.
4. Disconnect both supply and return side of all radiation, coils, etc. Blow out under air pressure.
5. Lubricate with preservative all valves and valve moving parts, dampers and damper valves.
6. Seal all outside damper and ventilation openings.
7. Remove all traps, flow valves, regulator valves, etc.
8. Clean both water side and fire side of all boilers.
9. Reseal water side of boiler, making as air tight as possible, to prevent oxidation.
10. Remove boiler breaching from chimney.
11. Clean chimney and seal all lower openings. Cap top of chimney, if possible.
12. Spray oxidation preservative on all fire side surfaces, doors, hand and man holes, bolts, nuts, etc.
13. Remove oil burner or swing out from boiler.
14. Wrap burner in plastic after spraying with preservative.
15. Spray all pumps, compressors, air flows, shafts, valves, regulators, etc. with preservative.

Electric:

1. Disconnect all main power distribution except:
    a. electric security and fire systems
    b. necessary lighting for security and checking building
    c. necessary drainage and sump pumps
2. Remove all lighting lamps not necessary for security and checking building. Store or use in other buildings.
3. Remove all electric motors possible, spray with preservative, wrap and store in dry area. (Record each motor move for replacement.)
4. Unremoved motors -- spray and wrap in place.

5. Remove all portable electric equipment and store.
6. Open and spray with oxidation preservative all electric distribution panels, public address, lighting, etc. panels.
7. Spray sockets of all lighting fixtures.
8. Clock systems -- remove slave clocks and master systems. Store, wrap, and spray.

Security:

1. Lock all doors and windows.
2. Board up all openings, windows, vents, etc.
3. Board up all door openings except one door to be used for security checks.
4. Arrange for a security and building condition check to be performed. Recommend minimum of three times weekly. (Log all building checks, dates, times, and conditions found.)
5. Notify police, fire, etc. agencies of building condition.
6. If building does not have fire or vandal protection system installed and money is available, install a minimum detection system (portable or otherwise) with loud bells or wire directly to protection agency.

General:

1. Keep exact records of all equipment moved or stored -- date, place, etc.
2. Keep up-to-date inventory of building and equipment.
3. Keep exact record of work performed, securing the building, lines cut or disconnected, equipment stored where for what.
4. Remove tension from all belt or spring-driven equipment.

B. A COMPENDIUM OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES INSTITUTED: EIGHT JURISDICTIONS

Chapter II(B) is intended as a supplement to the foregoing in-depth case studies. It is important to realize that what may be effective in one community may not be effective in others. Decisions concerning, for example, surplus facilities, pupil accommodation, and space consolidation are usually made on an individual basis; they cannot be applied equally across the system or from one jurisdiction to another. Therefore, although a clearly outlined policy is necessary to plan for change, it should allow for a certain degree of flexibility. Bearing this in mind, we have selected a variety of policies, procedures, and guidelines -- incorporating a number of specially designed instruments such as flow charts and questionnaires. Thus, boards in need of guidance are given a wider choice of workable and more or less successful practices, together with an idea of the experiences encountered in applying certain policies.

SUMMARIES

Frontenac County

The Frontenac County Board of Education's policy on school accommodation was adopted in an effort to involve the community in the decision-making process when a particular school closure is under consideration. Three sets of guidelines were drawn up:

1. Guidelines for examining the educational effectiveness and comparative costs of operating a school with declining enrolment.
2. Guidelines for determining the future use of a public elementary school.
3. Guidelines for the use of vacant classroom space (or space no longer required for students accommodation).

In applying this policy to three downtown schools, the board found that it did not evoke public support, but tended to create the claim that the decision to close had been a foregone conclusion, and that any input from parents and the community could only be regarded as some form of "rubber-stamping". The board's experience has led to the suggestion that the policy be revised.

London

School Accommodation Guidelines were formulated by the Board of Education for the City of London in June of 1977. They address themselves to four major areas of concern (and of special interest) in connection with surplus space: (1) guidelines for consolidation of schools; (2) guidelines for termination of the educational component of an elementary and secondary school; (3) guidelines for use of school space and declaration of closed space -- elementary schools*; and (4) guidelines for the use of vacant classrooms in open and closed schools.

They have resulted from a complete review of community briefs, of pertinent literature and of administrative material.

It is the primary goal of these guidelines to ensure that any recommendation concerning school accommodation take into account the need to provide all students with an equal opportunity to attain their fullest intellectual, physical, emotional and social potential.

The guidelines reflect an intention to recognize the goal that a school facility should be a community life support centre, and that implementation of the guidelines requires the active participation of the community and various government bodies.

Notwithstanding the above, the board recognizes that economic constraints related to the operation of its schools require the trustees to examine the feasibility of continuing to operate very small school units or schools with large areas of vacant space. These economic considerations shall be a factor in the decision-making process.

Like all major urban centres, London is hounded by declining enrolment in a number of schools. In mid-September, the future existence of eight elementary schools in one planning area was doubtful. At least two of these were expected to be closed.

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* The section for secondary schools would be developed in consultation with secondary school principals and teachers.

With 136 empty spaces, one of the schools qualifies for a viability study under the new guidelines mentioned above. This particular school has one more teacher during the current school year than its enrolment justifies, simply in order to avoid having to combine three grades in one classroom because of falling pupil numbers.

In addition to the threat of classrooms with three-way splits, maintenance costs in the area's partially filled schools prompted the administration's suggestion to assess their viability. (One area operates at 77% of its capacity; another planning district at only 59%.)

Compounding the board's headache is the mushrooming demand for school facilities in the suburbs.*

Niagara South

Administrative regulations of the Niagara South Board of Education state that the School Planning Committee reports to the board regarding any difficulties being experienced, alternative solutions, and the Committee's proposal for action. Following receipt of the report by the board, a notice shall be sent not later than December to parents and residents affected by changing enrolment patterns which may necessitate a major revision in an existing school attendance area. It shall contain a summary of the School Planning Committee's report, and give the place and date of the public meeting at which the report will be discussed.

The policy statement reads: "It shall be the policy of the board to review changing enrolment patterns in the jurisdiction on a regular, planned basis."

Three pages from the N.S.B.E. Policy Manual, listing operating procedures for enrolment reviews (effective date: September 20, 1977), appear below:

Operating Procedures:

1. The purposes of the process of communication and community involvement outlined in the Administrative Regulations shall be:
    a) to protect the academic, social and emotional welfare of the students affected;
    b) to ensure that all possible options for solution of the difficulty have been considered;

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* CODE clipping file.

c) to involve parents, staff and the school community in the decision-making process.

2. School Planning Committee Reports shall consider each of the following matters as appropriate:

   a) Enrolment data - present and projected figures for a minimum of 5 years;

   b) Financial data - breakdown of applicable fixed and variable costs;

   c) Staffing data - problems experienced;

   d) Accommodation data - rated and operating capacities, age and condition of building, etc.;

   e) Program data - regular and specialist teachers, special services, mixed grades, extra-curricular program;

   f) Transportation data - students transported, unusual traffic safety conditions.

3. School Planning Committee Reports shall outline the advantages and disadvantages of all options considered as solutions to the difficulty being experienced. The proposal for action shall be clearly identified.

4. Alternative options might include any of the following:

   - supplement programs in schools which do not meet the desired standards
   - establish multi-graded classes
   - pair schools to save costs
   - adjust school boundaries to better balance enrolments
   - close one or more classrooms
   - relocate special classes to use vacant accommodation
   - lease vacant space in order to obtain revenue and share maintenance costs
   - share accommodation with other educational agencies
   - close a school and transfer staff and students.

5. In cases where school closing is the proposal for action, the Report shall contain the following information:

   a) an outline of advantages and disadvantages of the educational experience of students in the school;

   b) an outline of the social influences on the community of the existing school and of any recommended changes;

   c) a study of enrolment and population statistics and of future development plans for the immediate and surrounding attendance areas;

d) a statement about school facilities in terms of the relationship of space used and not used for academic purposes, the state of repair of the building and possible alternate uses;

e) system statistics with regard to:

  (i) enrolment as compared to available pupil places;

  (ii) average costs per pupil for instruction, building operation and maintenance.

f) a statement of the financial and logistical constraints faced by the Board.

Nipissing

The Nipissing District Board of Education has been considering plans for school consolidation for some time. In June of this year, a meeting of the Joint Committee on King George Public School* was held. One of the suggested plans for action entailed the "possibility of conducting random sampling of the core area to determine the attitude of parents to the closing of neighbourhood schools". A questionnaire on Declining Enrolments and the Possible Closing of Neighbourhood Schools was designed and mailed out. (See copy below.)

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* Located in the central part of the city of North Bay.

SAMPLE LETTER

THE NIPISSING BOARD OF EDUCATION

RE: DECLINING ENROLMENT AND THE CLOSING OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOLS

Dear Public School Ratepayer:

Your are one of a random sample of North Bay ratepayers who is being asked to complete a short questionnaire on declining enrolments and the closing of neighbourhood schools. We would like your opinions on the importance of maintaining existing neighbourhood schools.

In a period when enrolment in the schools under the Nipissing Board is decreasing, the costs of educational facilities and services continue to rise. In an effort to keep costs to a minimum while maintaining the quality of education for all of our youngsters, one of the options the Board has been forced to consider has been the closing of under-utilized schools. There are many factors to consider in making such a decision, not the least of which is the value a local community places on its neighbourhood school.

You will find attached a background information sheet and a questionnaire.

Would you please return the completed questionnaire in the envelope provided. All responses will be kept anonymous. Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Robert J. Lynch
Director of Education

RJL/dw
Attachment

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Average enrolment in an elementary school in Ontario is 350. In Nipissing it is 240.

2. The Ministry of Education now provides the Nipissing Board of Education with a grant of 67% of $1366.00 which is our present ceiling on the cost of educating an elementary school pupil. The Nipissing board of Education currently spends $1380.00 per elementary school pupil. Anything above $1366.00 must be levied fully on the local ratepayer.

3. In September 1977, it is projected that at the elementary school level there will be more than 25 empty classrooms in the City of North Bay.

   Since declining enrolment is not uniform throughout the system some classes in some schools may be considerably smaller than average. This problem is less likely to occur with larger schools.

4. In closing a school the major savings are in fixed costs (administration and secretarial, utilities and insurance, caretaking, building maintenance) and not in direct instructional costs.

QUESTIONNAIRE

ON

DECLINING ENROLMENTS AND THE POSSIBLE CLOSING OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SCHOOLS

1. Do you have children who:

    (a) currently are in elementary school in Nipissing? Yes ○ No ○

    (b) currently are in secondary school in Nipissing? Yes ○ No ○

    (c) formerly attended school in Nipissing? Yes ○ No ○

    (d) have yet to reach school age? Yes ○ No ○

2. Suppose the Nipissing Board decided a substantial dollar saving could be realized by closing the elementary school one or more of your children were currently attending and transferring students to the closest school (or schools) where space was available.

    (a) Would you be opposed to such a decision (assuming the savings were accurately predicted)?

    Yes ○ No ○

    (b) Suppose the total savings were substantial by closing the school but the average ratepayer would only have to pay a few dollars more per year to retain your neighbourhood school, would you prefer to pay the higher taxes?

    Yes ○ No ○

(...2)

3. Now suppose the Board proposed closing a neighbourhood school which none of your children attended or would be attending, again to save money.

   (a) Would you be opposed to such a decision? Yes ○ No ○

   (b) Would you be willing to pay a few dollars annually in extra taxes to retain existing but under-used neighbourhood schools if your own children were not directly affected?

   Yes ○ No ○

4. If the school your child was attending were to be closed, how would you feel about the following?

   (a) It would help if the school your child was transferred to had some of the teachers from the former school.

   Very important ○
   Moderately important ○
   Unimportant ○

   (b) It would help if your child was in a class with most of his former classmates following the move.

   Very important ○
   Moderately important ○
   Unimportant ○

   (c) Would you feel better about the transfer if you felt sure the quality of the teaching staff and other resources were as good or better than at the former school?

   Yes ○ Better but still concerned ○ No ○

   (d) What other concerns would you have about the transfer or about closing a neighbourhood school?

   ____

		(a) CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (1–3)	(b) CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS (4–6)	(c) FORMERLY ATTENDED SCHOOL IN NIPISSING (7–9)	(d) HAVE YET TO REACH SCHOOL AGE (10–12)
1) Opposed to closing school child(ren) attend.	YES	49 58	33	42 62	23
	NO		57		37
b) Prefer to pay higher taxes to keep it open	YES	43	25	27	25
	NO	17	29	46	12
2) Opposed to closing school child(ren) do not attend.	YES	26	15	17	12
	NO	33	37	55	24
b) Prefer to pay higher taxes to keep it open.	YES	31	16	22	18
	NO	27	35	52	19
3) If school closed it would help to have some former teachers.	Very Important.	29	21	26	14
	Moderately Important.	18	16	24	13
	Unimportant	17	16	21	11
b) If school closed it could help to keep classmates together.	Very Important	31	19	26	23
	Moderately Important.	21	25	31	11
	Unimportant	9	9	15	3
c) If school closed would you feel better if staff & resources were as good or better.	YES	31	35	49	24
	Better but Concerned	22	14	19	11
	NO	6	2	8	1
d) Concerns.					

At a later meeting of the Joint Committee In July, the parents' committee voiced some concerns regarding the questionnaire:

(a) It was sent out before consulting with their committee.

(b) Some of the wording in the covering letter and in the questionnaire called for subjective value judgments on behalf of the respondents.

Survey Results

The collated responses to the questionnaire were distributed and analysed. It was the overall consensus of the group that the survey had served a useful purpose.

Ottawa

In addition to formulating (1) a basic guideline for the study of specific problem areas, and (2) a set of guidelines for determining accommodation requirements for elementary schools, the Ottawa Board of Education has produced a document on a significant phenomenon to which we have not yet alluded: the inter-relationship of declining enrolments with the growth of French immersion. Extracts are given below:

Declining Enrolment and Growth of French Immersion in the Elementary and Secondary Schools (Superintendents of Schools Department, O.B.E.)

During the past six years, the Ottawa Board has been experiencing a marked decline in enrolment at the elementary level. This is now beginning to be felt in secondary schools. Concomitant with this general decline has been a rapid growth of French immersion. These two forces working in concert have caused some serious problems in the areas of accommodation, personnel, program, and finances. In its report, the O.B.E. attempts to outline the situation in the elementary and secondary schools as it has developed over the past six years, and subsequently project this situation up to 1982. The report is presented in two parts:

Part A - Declining Enrolment
Part B - Growth of French Immersion

A. Declining Enrolment (1970-1982)

In absolute terms, the following enrolment changes have occurred between September 30, 1970 and September 30, 1976:

English Program	- 8539
French Program	+ 2839
Total Elementary	- 5700

Elementary French program enrolments are expected to level off in the early 1980's with about 4,200 pupils in the early and late immersion programs, or 24% of the total projected elementary enrolment.

The number of elementary schools with fewer than 200 pupils in the English grade 1-6 program has increased from 13 schools in 1970 to 37 out of 58 schools in 1976. Ten of these small schools have immersion pupils who could be added to the total.

It is expected that the steep enrolment declines which have affected the elementary panel will now begin to have a similar impact on the secondary schools.

As was indicated earlier, French immersion programs have accelerated the natural decline of regular English language elementary enrolments. A similar, if less dramatic decline, will be felt by the English language secondary schools as the bilingual high school program grows.

B. Growth of French Immersion

The simultaneous introduction and expansion of immersion programs at a time when the school population is declining, further complicates, and, in some cases, seriously aggravates the problem.

The Ottawa Board of Education has, in effect, two streams of students proceeding through the elementary and secondary systems.

Although it is a generally recognized fact that French immersion meets a clearly identified future need for many pupils, it does have definite disadvantages such as creating organizational difficulties and, as already stated, further aggravating the problem of diminishing numbers. This can be best illustrated by an examination of the effect of the opportunity to choose French immersion programs on kindergarten and grade 1 enrolments in certain schools, by tracing the distribution of a JK class as it moves through the early grades of a school:

Crichton Street Public School

		Jr. Kg.	Sr. Kg.		Grade 1	
		Eng.	Eng.	Fr.	Eng.	Fr.
Enrolment	1975	10				
	1976		17	17*		
	1977				15	16*

* Pupils opting for immersion leave Crichton and attend Manor Park and Rockcliffe Park Public Schools.

The actual enrolment (JK-6) at Crichton Public School as of September 1976 was 85 pupils. If French immersion were not available, the enrolment would have been 141 pupils.

Immersion programs have become so popular that a notable change in the composition of teaching staff in the elementary schools has resulted.

A similar, if somewhat less severe, effect will be evident in the secondary schools as the bilingual program continues, expands, and possibly spreads to a third centre.

The enrichment program in the elementary schools is also losing students to immersion programs; therefore, its future is very much in doubt.

The foregoing has been an attempt to highlight for the board the causes, effects, and problems of declining enrolment in Ottawa schools.

A number of questions requiring the board's immediate consideration were raised as a direct outcome of this report. Several of these relate specifically to French immersion:

1) What should be the organizational pattern for French immersion programs in the elementary schools as enrolment declines?

2) What limitations, if any, should be placed on extending French programs in the secondary schools?

* * *

Enrolment patterns throughout the province have been shifted through the introduction of French immersion. Both Cochrane-Iroquois Falls Boards of Education (public and separate) report continued development and extension of immersion and bilingual classes, and the ensuing plight facing English-speaking teachers. In Scarborough, too, the Bilingual School and French immersion programs are expected to expand. "Although programs such as these appear to make good educational use of vacant space, they tend to create their own problems...."

Earlier this year, one northern board heard a committee request to close a particular public school and to have French immersion occupy the building. At a board meeting with parents of this school, concern and outright resentment was expressed over the proposal. It was generally agreed that French immersion would change the school's image to a "private" and "privileged" one; the political aspect of the move was criticized; questions were raised as to whether French immersion was now "a fact of life". Parents disputed the transportation issue: they challenged the busing policy and demanded to know how many buses would be required and brought to the school area under consideration if French immersion moved in. (Originally parents had taken children to first-year immersion programs.) The economic factor became a bone of contention: it was suggested that parents of French immersion pupils should "pay extra" to compensate for higher per-pupil cost.

Scarborough

Report to the Board on Declining Enrolments - 1977 (Planning and Development)

This document -- which treats enrolment decline and growth -- consists of three parts:

A. Present and Future Accommodation Needs (September 30, 1976)

B. Closing and Twinning of Schools (February 18, 1977)

C. Occupational and Vocational School Enrolments and Accommodation, 1977 (Revised April 28, 1977)

We shall briefly discuss the first two:

Part A (Growth) deals only with those pupils living in the Sir Ernest MacMillan Sr. Public School attendance area in the northeast sector of the borough. (418 new grade 7 and 8 students are projected for this area; a senior public school must be built, and the board is awaiting approval from the Ministry of Education.) It contains (1) statistics on enrolments and elementary accommodation; (2) projections of school requirements supported by information from the Ministry of Education and other sources -- including a summary of projected new growth with a map of major areas of future expansion; (3) opinions on neighbourhood schools; and (4) suggestions of 5 interim options for the attendance area. Part A is designed to present "an overall picture of educational facilities and principles, how it is; how it was; and how it will be in the not too distant future". (page 35)

Part B (Decline) sets forth recommendations on the closing and twinning of schools.

Although the secondary level will feel the effect of declining enrolment shortly, the problems and possible solutions are different. Planning officials propose to discuss the elementary situation only in this study and to bring forward a further report on collegiates and secondary schools.

This report does not identify individual schools to be considered for closing or twinning. However, it does emphasize the need for developing a process for assessing whether or not a school should be closed and the need for an orderly procedure to be followed in such cases. In a similar way, the report addresses itself to the question of twinning. The material is presented under 9 headings:

(1) Educational, related and non-related uses -- school buildings and/or classrooms

(2) Critical nature of long-range projections

(3) Effective school size (split grades)

(4) Closing schools -- one choice

(5) Twinning schools -- another choice

(6) Points to be considered in closing a school

(7) Points to be considered in twinning a school

(8) Recommendations -- school closing

(9) Recommendations -- twinning of schools (two schools under one administration).

Following is a copy of the School Closing File questionnaire used by the Scarborough Board to determine priority for closing.

SCARBOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL CLOSING FILE

Project School ______________________________

Priority for Closing

Present Enrolment

Breakdown of Present Enrolment

J.K.	S.K.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Sp.Ed.	Total
____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____

Projected Enrolment Next Year

Five Year Projection

19__	19__	19__	19__	19__

Existing Accommodation

	Number	Accommodation
J.K. - S.K. Rooms	______	______
Classrooms	______	______
Total	______	______

Proposed School(s) for Community ______________________________

Quality of Education in the School

Current Year

1. Split Grades ______________________________

____

____

____

2. Special Instruction

Library Program ______________________________

____

Music Program ______________________________

____

French Program ______________________________

____

Art Program ______________________________

____

Physical Education Program ______________________________

____

Special Education Program ______________________________

____

3. Extra Curricular Program

____

____

____

____

____

____

Quality of Education in the School

Future Years

1. Split Grades

2. Special Instruction

   Library Program

   Music Program

   French Program

   Art Program

   Physical Education Program

   Special Education Program

3. Extra Curricular Program

Receiving School ______________________________

Present Enrolment ☐

Breakdown of Present Enrolment

J.K.	S.K.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Sp.Ed.	Total
___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

Enrolment of Closing School

J.K.	S.K.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Sp.Ed.	Total
___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

Totals

J.K.	S.K.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Sp.Ed.	Total
___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

Total Five Year Projection

19__	19__	19__	19__	19__
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Accommodation

	Number	Accommodation
J.K. - S.K. Rooms	___	___
Classrooms	___	___
Total	___	___

Human Physical and Fiscal Costs of Relocation

1. Human

Attitude of Community ____________________

____

____

____

2. Physical

Pupil Access to Proposed School(s) ____________________

____

____

____

Transportation ____________________

____

____

____

3. Fiscal

Operating Costs (non-instructional)

Caretaking ____________________

Secretarial ____________________

Maintenance - Plant Department ____________________

Maintenance - Office ____________________

Supplies - Caretaking ____________________

Supplies - Office ____________________

Capital Costs to Upgrade School ____________________

Total ____________________

Details of Upgrading required ____________________

____

Instructional Costs Above Per-pupil Formula

Difference between Principal's salary and average teacher salary ____________________

Chairman Allowance ____________________

(both items adjusted to reflect an increased allowance for the receiving school if necessary)

Special teacher saving

________________________________ ____________________

________________________________ ____________________

________________________________ ____________________

________________________________ ____________________

________________________________ ____________________

________________________________ ____________________

________________________________ ____________________

Total ____________________

Per Pupil Cost ____________________

Average K-6, K-8 Per Pupil Cost ____________________

Alternative Use

Existing Zoning ______________________________

____

____

Allowable Uses under Existing Zoning ______________

____

____

Recommended Uses ____________________________

____

____

Effect of Closing on the Neighbourhood and Surrounding Neighbourhoods

Recreation Effect ____________________________

____

____

____

Esthetic ______________________________________

____

____

____

Vandalism ____________________________________

____

____

____

Other Items Unique to the School

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

JWW:pt
June 3, 1977

Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County

A School Facilities Utilization Review was undertaken by the Board of Education for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, and revised on December 8, 1976. Excerpts from the document follow:

Objective

In consideration of the financial resources available to the board, to provide for students the best education possible.

Procedures

1. Preparation of a General Report by central office, relating enrolment data to facilities utilization. Schools operating at or above capacity or significantly below capacity, and/or with substandard facilities, shall be tentatively identified.*

2. The General Report shall be presented to the appropriate Principals' Association for recommendation.

3. A special committee of the board shall be appointed to review the General Report and recommendation of the Principals' Association. In addition to central administrative staff, two members of the Principals' Association shall be resource persons.

4. After consideration of the General Report and recommendation of the Principals' Association, the special board committee shall identify schools regarding further study, and the superintendent of the school concerned shall be charged with the responsibility of completing a special report in consultation with the principals and school committees concerned. The special report shall include, among other considerations, staffing, programs and transportation.

   The following options may be considered in the special report:

   a) supplement programs in schools which do not meet the desired standard
   b) pair schools to save administrative costs
   c) adjust enrolment boundaries
   d) lease vacant space to outside agencies
   e) share accommodation with another board
   f) close school and transfer students and staff or phase closing, a grade at a time.

5. If, after considering the special report for a school, the special committee of the board deems that a change in boundaries or closing or other action may be required, notice shall be given to the board, and an information meeting through the school committee shall be arranged with the community.

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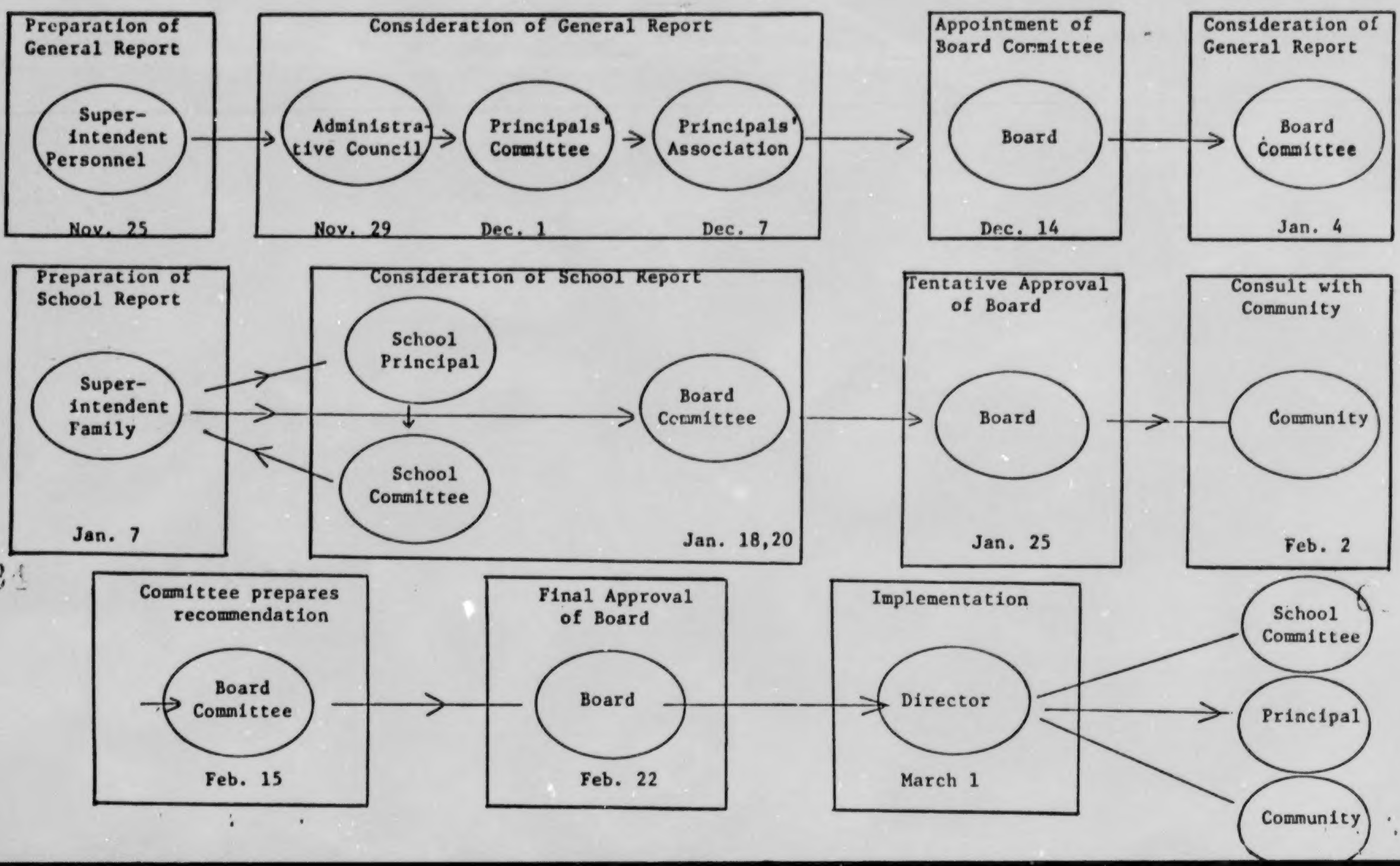
* For purposes of identifying substandard space or eligibility for a special facility, the Ontario Ministry of Education Capital Grant Plan was used as the basis for making a determination.

THE STORMONT, DUNDAS AND GLENGARRY
COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL FACILITIES
UTILIZATION REVIEW
PROCEDURES
1976 - 1977

FLOW CHART



Preparation of General Report
Super-intendent Personnel
Nov. 25
Consideration of General Report
Administrative Council
Nov. 29
Principals' Committee
Dec. 1
Principals' Association
Dec. 7
Appointment of Board Committee
Board
Dec. 14
Consideration of General Report
Board Committee
Jan. 4
Preparation of School Report
Super-intendent Family
Jan. 7
Consideration of School Report
School Principal
School Committee
Board Committee
Jan. 18,20
Tentative Approval of Board
Board
Jan. 25
Consult with Community
Community
Feb. 2
Committee prepares recommendation
Board Committee
Feb. 15
Final Approval of Board
Board
Feb. 22
Implementation
Director
March 1
School Committee
Principal
Community

6. If, after meeting the community, a change in boundaries or closure is recommended by the special committee of the board, approval of the board shall be requested.

7. The board, in approving a recommendation of the special committee for change in attendance boundaries or closure, shall give reasonable notice to the community before implementation.

8. In order to provide for both adequate planning and community involvement, the special school reports shall be organized into a five-year plan in order of priority for implementation.

We are reproducing a flow chart which presents a clear picture of the school facilities utilization review procedures.

Recommendations

In consideration of facilities (and enrolment) as outlined, it is recommended that special school reports be prepared on specified school groupings, and that these include the following:

Introduction
Enrolment Projection
Staffing
Programs
Transportation
Options
Recommendations

Sudbury R.C.S.S.

The following procedure has been adhered to in closing schools during the period 1969-1977:

1. Study of school population (board).
2. Study of possible alternatives in providing educational services (board).
3. Meeting with parents of students to discuss alternatives and receive input. (Ratepayers may attend.)
4. Recommendation from the Education Committee to the board.
5. Information regarding board decision is delivered to parents.
6. Consideration of individual and collective protests.

* * *

In the third part of this chapter, we shall summarize the common strands or threads which bind all facilities policies, practices and reports established by Ontario education systems together.

C. COMMON STRANDS: SUMMARY FINDINGS

Boards of education can learn to cope with shrinkage by developing appropriate strategies. As we have seen, some boards already have policies or established practices which are relevant to the issue of redundant school facilities and consolidation in declining systems.

Although a number of jurisdictions have not adopted a formal policy to date, they presently have a report on declining enrolment "under discussion". Many boards have made provisions for the transfer of surplus staff, but have not yet looked into alternative utilization of surplus facilities. Others have just begun to define -- or are in the process of pinpointing -- problem areas, by determining system-wide accommodation availability and requirements.

One board for which decline does not present a problem to be faced immediately has mapped out a contingency plan in readiness for any future emergency.

The inaugural CODE conference on October 14 acted as an "alarm clock" in the case of quite a few boards: it mobilized them into action, so to speak. To illustrate one example, several representatives of a certain board attended this meeting. (Until then, trustees and administrative staff had been quite confident that falling enrolment did not constitute a major factor in their jurisdiction.) Now they have decided that rather than sit on their laurels hoping the problem will go away, they should review the situation, and draw up suitable long-range plans.*

Judging by correspondence received in the CODE office from the various regions, boards are gradually awakening to the realization that some form of guideline is required -- keeping in mind the geographical problems that are unique to the area and the facilities that are available: "...solutions...depend on such factors as location, size of the jurisdiction, mix of schools within the district, and the philosophy of the board."[11]

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* CODE clipping file.

[11] Rideout, E. Brock, et al., Meeting Problems of Declining Enrolment (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1975).

Portions of these letters have been extracted to indicate (1) what steps, if any, have been taken to date, and (2) the rationale for taking -- or not taking -- such steps. All corners of the province are represented.

1. While frequent discussions have been carried on regarding declining enrolments and their implications, we have not produced any major reports specifically on this topic. A board committee has been established to study the problem of decreasing school size; talks were held with parents in two or three locations last year, but no action has been taken as yet. Minutes of these meetings...are very brief and not very revealing as far as the real issues are concerned.

2. We do not have any specific policy or statement related to declining enrolment, only a policy on redundancy.

3. (Our) board of education has not formulated a specific policy to deal with enrolment change. With the exception of a "transfer and tenure" clause in the negotiated contract with the teachers, no specific lines have been developed in written form.

4. To date, no specific policy at the board level has been formulated, but enrolments are reviewed carefully by the board members each year.

5. ...the Carleton Board of Education has never faced the problem of declining enrolment. In addition the Official Plan for the Ottawa-Carleton Region anticipates future growth within the Carleton Board's jurisdiction for the next 25 years.... For this reason, Carleton Board staff did not carry a study in relation to declining enrolment and the problems associated with it. On the contrary, all staff program studies are concerned with solving problems from experienced and anticipated growth.

6. The Hamilton-Wentworth R.C.S.S. Board has established a committee of trustees and administrators to study the impact of declining enrolment and resources. To date, the committee has recommended the joint administration of two pairs of schools. Further recommendations for board consideration are expected prior to the formulation of the 1978 school system budget.

7. The board has no definite policy dealing with issues related to declining enrolment, such as closing of schools, relocation of staff, and release of redundant staff. Trustees deal with these issues individually as they arise.

8. Consideration of a policy of accommodation could be initiated and pursued. Over- and under-occupancy could be relieved if the policy were carefully established and designed.

9. This board has an active Ad Hoc Committee on school accommodation, staffing, attendance area and school organization needs based on five-year enrolment forecasts which are updated on an annual basis. Boundary changes and portable classroom relocations, effective September, 1977, resulted from recommendations made by this committee. Long-term facility needs will be a major study area during the coming year.... Classrooms will continue to become surplus in several areas and, in some cases, portable units will be freed.

10. There has not been any significant decrease in enrolment in (our) county over the past few years. Therefore, we have not required an internal report on this particular matter.

11. During the coming year it will be necessary to review and analyse these forecasts so that we can make appropriate long-range plans regarding staffing, programs and facilities.

Some typical titles of documents on school facilities and consolidation are:

Accommodation Report (or Policy)

Consolidation of Accommodation

Practices to be followed in Closing Schools and Classrooms in Future Years*

Survey of Functional Utilization of Existing School Facilities

Survey of Surplus Classrooms*

School Facilities Utilization Review

A Study of Alternative Accommodation for Students (in a Designated Area)

Closing of a Public School* (Policy)

Twinning/Pairing of Public Schools* (Policy)

Formula for Closing of Surplus Classrooms: Utilization of Surplus Space - Public Schools*

Consolidation of School Space*

    (1) Criteria for Closure

    (2) Process of Closure

    (3) Conversion of Space

Process for School Closing and Alternative Use of Facilities

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* These refer nearly exclusively to elementary schools; reports on the closing and twinning of secondary schools have, in most cases, not yet been undertaken, or are just getting under way.

Boards agree that if adopted early, these policies and/or practices will afford sufficient time for full discussions by all affected parties, and for planned gradual changes.

Most reports on facilities and accommodation contain (1) the rated capacity of the school(s) (frequently broken down by grade and classroom); (2) accommodation leased to -- or used by -- community groups, Parks and Recreation, or outside agencies/organizations, in order of priority; (3) number of specialized rooms, classified as either "adequate" or "substandard" (e.g. gymnasium, resource centre/library, art or music room, general purpose room); (4) description of building and grounds including play area, traffic conditions, history of school building, and maps of attendance and surrounding areas; (5) age and general physical condition of the building(s); an inventory of classrooms and/or equipment (sometimes with a floor plan attached); and, finally, (6) a list of upgrading priorities and/or possible future modifications/renovations/repairs required -- such as boiler replacement, plumbing and electrical repairs, interior paint, carpeting or improved fire exit/stairs.

Recent surveys on facilities and accommodation generally encompass both elementary and secondary schools.

A separate viability study usually accompanies the above reports.* It establishes the minimum effective size below which the school's operation is no longer viable, and which necessitates a review to assess the effectiveness of the unit. This figure varies; it is usually in the range of 150 pupils (K-5), 175 (K-6) and 200 to 275 for K-8. (The Director of Education for the Central Algoma Board attended a Ministry seminar on declining enrolment in Toronto; upon his return, he commented that some boards are closing schools with less than 275 pupils: "That would wipe out all my school system."**) Instead of an actual enrolment figure, some boards prefer to use a percentage of the school's rated (or effective) capacity, or a certain pupil/teacher ratio. Whatever the criteria, they identify areas in which schools are approaching a critical stage. The Ottawa Board of Education speaks of meetings held in an

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* Unless a "viability of school size" clause is written into a board's policy on school consolidation/closure.

** CODE clipping file.

"atmosphere of conflicting viewpoints" concerning the viability of the small school in relation to its high unit cost, or, as one trustee put it, "balancing the interests of a neighbourhood against those of the total community."

Increasingly, boards are recognizing the importance of cooperation with other systems* to compare problems, consider solutions and develop mutually beneficial policies. Questions of reciprocal interest are the amount of empty space the other board has or requires, whether there are plans for building new schools or abandoning surplus ones in the area, and whether sharing accommodation is a viable alternative. As a case in point, the Scarborough Board of Education's Committee on Declining Enrolments and Twinning of Schools obtained reports from several jurisdictions in Ontario, the rest of Canada and the United States, as well as from the Ontario Ministry of Education. Upon visiting with board officials at Peel and Etobicoke, the Committee concluded that "the particular school situation in each case varied, but the general problems and the general approach were about the same. In those areas where the schools were small to begin with, the problems have appeared more quickly and with greater severity. In those areas where busing is a more standard procedure, the answer is more obvious; but in all cases there seems to have been a general pattern." (B, p.6)

A majority of boards have appointed advisory committees and task forces to provide relevant information and discussion within the framework of existing policies. Their function, in succinct terms, is:

> "(1) to conduct a study of the designated area and each school within it; (2) to consider alternative solutions for the area, and make recommendations on its future to the board, and/or (3) to facilitate the implementation of the decision of the board with regard to a neighbourhood."12

These committees consist of representatives of board administrators, trustees, staff of the schools under study (principals and teachers), parents, and the community at large. Frequently, resource persons and/or consultants, as well as members of the municipal planning board are invited to attend meetings.

Quite a few boards set up more than one committee -- so-called "working", "study", or "auxiliary" committees. Hastings County is one example. Here the Task Force on Implications of a Changing System consists of the Core Committee which receives regular interim reports from auxiliary committees in preparation for a final Futures Report to be submitted to the board by December 31, 1977.

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* The Ottawa and Carleton Boards of Education exemplify this well.

12 Rideout, E. Brock, op. cit., p.184.

In one particular board, as many as five committees were involved in the task of information-gathering. Confusion developed over "who was responsible for what", as can be seen from the following board statement: "One of the difficulties that the ABC Committee has experienced in responding to these resolutions is that lack of a clear distinction between the work of the DEF Committee and the work that the board has requested from the administration." Two lessons are learned from this experience: (1) too many committees can spoil the broth; (2) the respective roles of the committees must be clarified at the beginning, otherwise much confusion, overlap, and duplication results.

Board and committee participation in "think tanks", workshops, seminars, and brainstorming sessions met with overwhelming success. Delegates who attended a workshop on declining enrolment at the Northern Ontario Public Secondary School Trustees' Association Convention were most emphatic about the invaluable exchange of information that took place from contact with trustees wrestling with similar issues.

It is more widely acknowledged now that long-range, overall planning for alternative use of surplus facilities is crucial. Such a master plan presupposes accurate enrolment statistics - past, current, and future.*

Enrolments are generally predicted for five years, although some boards are currently completing ten-year projections for each school in the district. (A breakdown by grade or classroom is common.) Projections tend to be based on school enrolment records from previous years; general demographic data -- such as (1) population shifts (migration patterns), (2) live birth rates (number of baptisms in the case of R.C.S.S. boards); and current information supplied by municipal or regional planners about proposed developments, land assembly programs, potential zoning changes and population shifts in residential neighbourhoods. This last source of enrolment projections is deemed important in that the suburbs (on the outskirts of large urban centres), where young families prefer to settle, have not caught up with the crunch yet; any sudden change in the composition of a residential area has to be monitored closely to ensure that boards are not taken by surprise with an emergency on their hands.*

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* Plans differ because of the diversity of school board organization, composition (English/French/ethnic), and size.

Within the last year or so, another major data base available to school planners from the annual assessment records (regional and municipal) has become much more accurate, more up-to-date, and more accessible. These data contain the ages of all members of every household and the school support; it is considered invaluable since it can now be broken down into individual school areas.

School-by-school enrolment projections are usually updated and/or adjusted annually; they are found to contribute significantly to the total picture of accommodation changes occurring in a certain school or individual unit.

Statistics for enrolment forecasts are provided by board planners, various school administrators (superintendents), Statistics Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Education, the OISE Planning Department and municipal governments.

Enrolment "bulges" -- mixed clusters of growth and decline -- present a real problem in practically all urban areas throughout the province, and further complicate the already formidable task of long-range accommodation planning.

Vocational and, especially, occupational programs appear to be in greater demand; enrolment in this category is remaining stable or even steadily increasing. (One board has compiled data to support the statement "occupational enrolment will exceed accommodation through to 1986 and beyond.") More than one jurisdiction has had to spend a good portion of its time trying to solve the dilemma posed by the accommodation requirements for occupational/vocational students while space was available elsewhere. Hal Willis, Director of Education for the Ottawa Board of Education, attributes the growing popularity of vocational schools to the weakness of the job market, the lower dropout rate, and more attractive vocational facilities and programs.

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* Lately an expected enrolment increase has not materialized in one or two communities: houses in a brand new subdivision stood empty for months waiting for owners, as a result of an over-saturated market and overall economic slump.

French immersion poses a threat to English program enrolments, mainly in the Ottawa region, and in some northern Ontario areas. Boards are exploring ways to remedy this imbalance.

A major problem encountered in projecting enrolments begins with "somewhere along the line...":

> "Somewhere along the line, about 350 fresh-faced Waterloo County elementary school children have disappeared."
>
> "Somewhere along the line, there are 274 students missing from this year's Perth County school enrolment."

These statements, excerpted from the CODE newspaper clipping file, typify a syndrome which is disturbing many boards: elementary and secondary school attendance is declining (or increasing, as in Peel) even more rapidly than anticipated -- the result of unreliable and inaccurate projections. As one board puts it:

> "...this jurisdiction appears to be in a rather enviable position of looking towards increasing rather than declining enrolment. Therefore, the following figures relate to our projected increase over the next four years; but let me assure you, they are based on rather dubious data and may have little validity, in fact.... I only wish I had some concrete facts on which to base our projections."

In the Lake Superior District school division, difficulties are compounded by industrial development in Marathon and Terrace Bay, which draws in additional workers and their families for a temporary period only, and inflates school enrolments as happened last year in one elementary and one secondary school. When the industrial development is completed, the temporary workers disappear, taking their children with them, thus decreasing enrolments. This year the closing of Wilroy Mines in Manitouwadge has created further uncertainty and made enrolment forecasts still more indefinite.

Reasons for loopholes in predictions given by other boards ranged from "construction of parochial (Christian, Mennonite) schools" and "transfer to private or R.C. separate schools" to "increased migration of families out of (or within) the region." The last major contributor to the error seems to be the fact that projections are largely based on the experience of the previous year.

OISE enrolment forecasts are found to have been over-estimated in a number of instances.

"In the context of its long-term master plan, a board (or the advisory committee) generally conducts an annual review of the existing conditions within its jurisdiction. On the basis of this report and the guidelines in its existing policies, a board will be in a position to identify areas in which schools meet the criteria for review."[13]

Danger signals for individual schools which warrant prompt attention are as follows:*

1. Enrolment less than 175** in K-6 schools
2. Enrolment less than 225** in K-8 schools
3. Enrolment is 60%** of effective capacity
4. Consistent dropping of kindergarten enrolment for several years
5. A large ratio of split or multi-grade classes
6. Limited facilities for specialized activities
7. A considerable number of locked classrooms
8. High per-pupil operating costs
9. Enrolment fails to justify scheduled maintenance costs
10. Limited new housing in area.

The early alerting of the community to the study being undertaken -- prior to any decisions having been made -- is accepted as a positive approach. This gives residents an opportunity to express their views, and to actively participate in deciding the fate of their own neighbourhood school.*** Input from the community is, as a rule, encouraged through (1) survey questionnaires and (2) briefs from various groups (e.g. Home and School, parents' committees). Resource persons and/or consultants are employed at the discretion of the board or advisory committee.

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[13] Rideout, E. Brock, op. cit., p. 85.

* All but two of these "signals" are cited in the Declining Enrolment Committee Report of the Windsor Board of Education.

** Figures differ according to type of board (urban/rural) and school size.

*** Several plans have been modified as a result of community involvement in the decision-making process.

At least 18 months are required to prepare a community adequately for the future of their school -- especially if closure is one of the alternatives under consideration. Some senior board administrators suggest a long time period -- up to three years.

Viable options -- based on established guidelines and practices -- have been developed by some board planners and senior staff (or committees) in response to the growing number of partially filled and vacant classrooms in Ontario schools. Any plan for alternatives regarding accommodation surpluses generally aims at improving, or at least maintaining, the quality of services and educational opportunity a system delivers -- in the face of ever shrinking financial resources. It is becoming an accepted practice to consider one or more of the following strategies when confronting the problem of declining enrolment within a school:

1. Adjust attendance-area boundaries.
2. Supplement/upgrade programs in schools which do not meet the desired standards.
3. Relocate programs (e.g. special education, ESL, French Immersion).
4. Alter existing school organizational structures; reorganize grade level breakdown.
5. Establish split classes (but avoid triple gradings within one classroom).
6. Twin or pair schools.
7. Establish special-purpose open-enrolment schools.
8. Use vacant classroom space for other needs of the public/separate education system -- e.g. special education (remedial) programs, adult education, decentralization of administrative offices, storage, etc.
9. Share accommodation with another board; develop community use of the facility; or lease vacant classroom space in order to obtain revenue and/or share maintenance costs, where compatibility with the continuing operation of the school unit permits. The following order of priority is observed -- in accordance with Ministry of Education guidelines:

(a) use for accommodation of students of the separate school board or other non-profit schools,

(b) use for needs of the publicly supported post-secondary educational system,

(c) use for needs of the community (e.g. community centres, libraries, day-care centres, etc.),

(d) use for the needs of other government agencies,

(e) use for the needs of the private sector.

10. Lock one or more surplus classrooms.

11. Repatriate grades 7 and 8 to their own schools.

12. Close the school and transfer students and staff, or phase closing, one grade at a time. (Transportation is an important consideration here.) Attempt to use the building in a method outlined in (8) and (9) above. If the board cannot lease the building, it may be offered for sale (according to Ministry of Education guidelines) to the following, in order:

    (a) another school board,

    (b) a publicly supported post-secondary educational institution,

    (c) the municipality in which the land is located or to the local board thereof,

    (d) a Ministry of the Government of Ontario or an authority established by it,

    (e) a non-profit organization funded in whole or in part on a continuing basis by the Provincial Government or the Government of Canada,

    (f) the general public -- through the process of public tender, if no offer to purchase at a price acceptable to the school board is received within 90 days.

    Mothball the building only if it is absolutely impossible to sell or lease it.

School boards tend to adopt any combination of the above options. We shall take a closer look at a few of these -- with special emphasis on school closure which, because of its controversial nature, is only considered as a last resort after an exhaustive review of alternatives 1 through 11.

Adjust Boundaries

Attendance-area boundaries are adjusted in cases where there is an enrolment decline in one area accompanied by an enrolment increase in a neighbouring one. In other words, two neighbourhoods are combined. To cite an example, the Carleton Board of Education's vocational and French-speaking secondary school students need more space; the Ministry of Education has vetoed new construction until a study on available accommodation in Ottawa Board of Education schools is completed. A reorganization and transfer of schools from the Ottawa to the Carleton Board is one of the various possibilities being explored.

Windsor Board of Education trustees have referred to boundary changes as (1) a "band-aid" measure, (2) a substitute to closing schools, (3) "merely academic moves", and (4) "an interim kind of solution", since the board owes it to the citizens of Windsor to make every effort to consider all other prevailing choices before a school has to be closed.*

Split Classes

As school enrolments continue to fall, split grades are organized, ideally, to benefit the students. However, when a school's grade enrolment declines beyond a certain point, split grades become the only alternative; this is not felt to be educationally desirable. Triple gradings within one classroom are avoided because it is more difficult for the teacher to simultaneously plan and prepare lessons for students of 3 grade levels. Fewer teachers with specialized interest or training in such areas as art, music, French, physical education, withdrawal help for children with special needs, science and library are available to provide diversified programs. Opportunities for extracurricular activities are also more limited.

Twin Schools

Twinning (or pairing) schools is the term used for placing two schools under one administrative unit in order to reduce administrative costs. The total amount saved depends on the schools twinned and the cost of any adjustments (e.g. maintenance) that have to be made.

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* CODE clipping file.

By twinning schools, the board of education is demonstrating to the community real concern about the parallel dilemma of rising costs and declining enrolments and its willingness to take steps to alleviate these problems. Twinning is often seen as a *middle* -- rather than a *final* -- step, since the number of vacant classrooms remains the same. Some boards have used twinning as an intermediate step to closing a school. On the other hand, experience has shown that pairing should not automatically lead to closure. Several policies have special clauses built into them to the effect that (1) there must be a guarantee that at least one of the schools will be able to remain open for a number of years, and (2) the two schools to be paired are chosen such that the larger might accommodate the smaller *if* the latter were closed.

Small schools with (1) five or fewer grade classes; (2) a combined enrolment of 450 pupils or less are considered for twinning. (Sometimes, instead of pairing two small schools, boards choose one smaller and one larger unit.) Schools to be twinned are close geographically in order to minimize travel time. Another important factor is that the two schools are within the same or similar -- as well as adjacent -- communities. Both schools share the same principal and superintendency. Additional items unique to the schools or their communities are taken into account.

Three distinct advantages of twinning are:

1. It is possible to maintain the small neighbourhood school while still achieving some of the benefits that might come from closing.
2. Both buildings remain open and keep traditions alive.
3. In the case of secondary schools, the two buildings together provide *complete* facilities for academic *and* vocational courses.

Time allowed for implementation of a twinning policy is one year to 18 months. All parties concerned are made aware of this in the early stages.

Use vacant classroom space for other needs of the public/separate education system

Included in this option are junior kindergarten; expanded remedial programs (speech, reading, etc.); improved physical or outdoor education; art, music, French (immersion), ESL; and ethnic languages (Heritage Language program) in schools serving high concentrations of ethnic groups. Special enrichment programs for gifted children have been introduced.

Schools may require surplus space for staff rooms, general purpose rooms, "gymtoria", resource centres, custodial (storage) areas, science rooms, guidance or coordinators'/consultants' offices.

Thriving continuing education classes, guided by the philosophy that lifelong learning is a worthwhile endeavour, provide educational and recreational programs for adults. The Continuing Education Division of the Ottawa Board of Education serves as a typical example. It was established in 1965; ten years later it had more than doubled in terms of program and registration. The Continuing Education Division's day school began in 1973, and is currently offered in six English and two French schools. In its first term in 1973, there were 536 registrations. In 1975, the day program registered 6,117 students at five different schools and at 14 senior citizens' locations.

As indicated earlier, the enrolment in the special vocational schools has increased slightly each year while the enrolment in regular programs has been plummeting. Special vocational programs are mushrooming in various centres. One such innovative program has been implemented by the Ottawa Board in three English and one French secondary vocational schools. (The first of these opened in 1967.) The program seeks to instil confidence and develop a positive self-image in students whose learning problems have affected their achievement in the regular system. This goal is accomplished through basic academic, social and job-related skills (i.e. essential life skills) to equip students either to enter directly into the work force, or to go onto further education if he/she has the capability. Approximately one-half day is devoted to academic subjects, and one-half day to vocational ones. Students in the second, third and fourth years of the program do a two-week field placement in a job setting each fall and spring.

Admission requirements specify that a student has to be 13/15 years old (age varies by school), and must have spent at least one full year in the intermediate division (grade 7, 8) or its equivalent (i.e. senior opportunity class).

Similarly, the Durham Board of Education has received a report on a program for early school leavers aged 14 and 15 who cannot cope with or benefit from the regular system. The Early School-Leavers Program is being developed to help the students with basic communications and mathematics, improve their life skills, and assist them in finding jobs. According to one trustee, "The program is doing such a good job, it is trying to create business for itself."*

The Etobicoke Board cautions against masking declining enrolment by filling space in a shrinking school. "The community becomes accustomed to enjoying these programs and doesn't want to give them up to consolidate with another school which does not offer such special extras!" What is meant is that the fact of redundant space must be made readily apparent to the community.

Lease vacant space in order to obtain revenue and/or share maintenance costs; develop community use of the facility; or share accommodation with another board

Surplus space in Ontario jurisdictions is leased at a rent determined in accordance with Ministry of Education memoranda and regulations.

Rental fees are based on cost recovery: there is a strong feeling** that the leasing organization must be ready to pay the full operational/maintenance cost of the classrooms, about $1,200 per year, or the regular educational program will suffer. Comparability of use is another major consideration; most residential areas have zoning regulations to protect the neighbourhood. Non-profit organizations which are compatible with the school's first priority -- namely, the education of its children -- only pay a small nominal fee. ($1.00 is not uncommon.) Concern has been expressed that Ministry guidelines make a building available to many different social agencies, the proposed uses of which might not be compatible with the neighbourhood or zoning by-laws. In addition it is recognized that the accommodation of proposals from all Ministry-prescribed agencies is very time-consuming. A deadline of 90 days has been set by some boards for receipt of proposals.

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* CODE clipping file.

** On the part of numerous board officials (e.g. the Scarborough Board of Education).

A school board may decide to write a cancellation clause into the lease.

The Ottawa R.C.S.S. Board's leasing arrangements are well worth noting. Three schools are presently being leased. As rental fee, the lessee is responsible for any operation, maintenance and repair costs incurred. The board maintains insurance on the buildings, and pays for the cost of repairs to the structure. Any negative grant applicable to the leasing of the schools is charged to the lessee as rental.

Occasionally, a school board will have drawn up separate guidelines for "Use of Vacant Classrooms - Open/Closed Schools".* The major difference between these lies in financial considerations. Requests for commercial use are not granted if the school is still required for pupil accommodation. However, a closed facility which is inadequate by virtue of its excessive maintenance cost, its need for costly major renovation and/or its failure to conform to safety codes can be leased for profit on the condition that development proposals furnish the following:

(a) A fair rental return for the land.
(b) Use and site to conform with the municipality's official plan.
(c) Allocation of sufficient space for classrooms should they be required now or in the future.
(d) Allocation for adequate space for a community centre.
(e) Title to the buildings to pass to the board of education at the termination of the lease.

Both policy guidelines share the clause referring to notification of the community: "A school community should be advised by the principal (or board), in writing, of any proposed rental of vacant classrooms at least 30 days prior to the signing of the lease. A public meeting shall be held at the request of the community through a recognized group. If no such group exists, the principal shall determine the need for a community meeting and so arrange."

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* The London Board of Education.

School boards try to maximize community use of school facilities in many ways. Vacant space is most frequently used for expanded special education*, nursery and pre-school as well as school-age daycare programs. Health and psychiatric units/clinics, various community groups and social service agencies make extensive use of surplus classrooms. Users may be recreation or leisure agents; the Department of Parks and Recreation runs daytime and evening programs for adults and children. Alternate (e.g. Montessori) schools and community colleges have taken over school space.** Classrooms have seen conversion to art and dance studios.

Boards are moving some offices into schools afflicted by declining enrolment, or converting whole buildings to Education Centres. Surplus space is sometimes used for centralized maintenance and supply areas. One board is considering use of part of a school for a Juvenile Court; another system is thinking of inviting the community to restore an auditorium as an historical site, since the school represents an important link with tradition. The Etobicoke Board of Education has under consideration the conversion of surplus buildings to senior citizen housing.***

Recently the XXX Regional Children's Museum backed out of an earlier request to lease a certain public school. The non-profit museum changed its mind about a $1.00-a-year lease because of funding difficulties and Education Ministry red tape. Museum patrons were worried about the $300,000 needed to renovate the school and the price tag on maintaining such an elderly structure.****

Some jurisdictions stress multi-use, particularly if one or two entire floors become vacant in a school unit. In such an event, a principal stipulation is again that when multiple tenants are secured, they be compatible with the ongoing operation of the facility.

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* These programs serve children with mental, physical, perceptual, and emotional handicaps. Example: At Clinton Street Junior Public School in Toronto, a program for the trainable retarded has been integrated as much as possible with the school.

** The University of Ottawa is prepared to lease an entire building, as soon as one becomes available in the area.

*** Community use of surplus classrooms and/or buildings is discussed in detail in Chapter III.

**** CODE clipping file.

Sharing accommodation with an adjacent board is accepted practice in cases where neighbouring boards encounter simultaneous growth and decline. On occasion, two elementary boards (public and separate) have planned to close schools at the same time; mutual consideration was deemed beneficial in such an event.

Lock one or more classrooms

A few school boards have adopted a formula for the closing of surplus classrooms.

Depending on the number of grade or special education classes (1-8, 9-16, 17+), 1 to 3 surplus rooms are allocated to public schools to be utilized for program enrichment. (Prior to issuing a declaration of closed space, a school board may authorize principals to designate vacant rooms for various purposes on the basis of September 30 enrolment in the current school year: up to 250 pupils -- one classroom; 251+ pupils -- two classrooms. This space can, at any time, revert to alternate use.) Individual spare classrooms (over this formula) that are not leased to community organizations are locked to reduce heating and caretaking costs. The annual savings for a locked classroom are estimated to be $1,250.

Close the school and transfer students and staff

School closure is considered to be the most decisive and major step in solving the problem of declining enrolments. B.J. Kipp, Director of Education for the Ottawa R.C.S.S. Board, speaks of "one of the basic skills required ... is that of closing schools. We must be able to consolidate and still maintain public support. To adjust to reduced income, the system must operate fewer units. The pain of closing schools is less severe than the pain of having inadeqaute funds to operate the system".

Closure has also been described as a very complex issue; a short-sighted measure with many consequences.[14] Indeed, the decision to close a school is sometimes too hastily conceived and later regretted because anticipated savings have been forthcoming due to a variety of reasons. For instance, additional expenditures may be required for modifying facilities in receiving schools and extra buses may have to be provided. This negative aspect is corroborated in the Andrews study. 33.3% of the school districts (in the United States) who had calculated actual cost savings after the closure of elementary schools concluded that they had saved money (between $2,000 and $60,000), but it was less than had been projected before the schools were closed. On the other hand, 50% of those districts who had calculated actual savings concluded that no money had been saved by the closure of schools; this was attributed to increased transportation costs, reduced school support, increased crime rate, decreased property values, and disruption of educational programs. The remaining 16.7% of the schools indicated that the closures had cost the district more money.

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[14] Andrews, Richard L. et al., The Environmental Impact of School Closures (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1974).

Even in cases where savings have been realized, it is recognized that cost is not the sole issue, but that the economic concept must be balanced against (a) safety factors; (b) quality of educational experience; and (c) impact on the community neighbourhood.

It is a fact that the small local school represents the centre for community vitality, pride and neighbourhood identification. A decision to close can have long-term effects on the cohesive fabric of a neighbourhood. Angry parents might well ask: "Why should my child be transferred one mile if there is a school one block away?" Community residents wonder if the area will become industrialized after the school closes, and to what extent the neighbourhood will be disrupted. The question of property devaluation arises: it is commonly argued that the proximity of a school increases property value while the absence of that same school will diminish it. Twenty districts in the U.S. conducted formal (4) or informal (16) studies on the impact of school closures on neighbourhoods. The result can be summarized thus: "Once an elementary school is closed, the environmental forces of out-migration, population decline and neighbourhood deterioration are set in motion. It is difficult - if not impossible - to reverse these."[15]

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[15] Andrews, R.L., op. cit., pp. 32-33.

Boards tend to encounter confrontations with the community largely on a *proposal* to close; relatively little criticism is heard *after* closing has been effected and the children are settled in their new environment.

Some parents will value the advantage of a small neighbourhood school more highly than the opportunities for diversified, improved programs offered in the larger school. They are even willing to pay higher taxes to keep "their" school open. One spokeswoman for a large urban board has stated: "We are still maintaining these (small) schools, paying heat, light and maintenance costs. The board could do things much more cheaply if we amalgamated schools, but we are reluctant to do so because it would *affect real estate values* and the *way these communities operate*."* This particular board has examined the problem of declining enrolment for about a year. However, it is such a hot issue, that *trustees plan to let parents decide the outcome*.

One board has already carried out this plan for some time.** When, after much study and debate, the administration recommends to the board that a certain school be closed, each parent receives written notification of the recommendation with a request to voice opinions.

The board then appoints a committee of the principals of all schools concerned, with the Director of Education, business administrators, and 5 of the most vocal parents who are opposed to the closing of the school(s). No trustees are appointed to the committee.

The committee meets over a period of time; it is given all the facts so that it can arrive at a knowledgeable decision. In *every* case the committee has made recommendation that the school be closed.

A number of boards have paired schools, organized split grades and locked surplus classrooms prior to closing a building. Parents and the community are, therefore, already aware of the declining enrolments in these schools, and, at the same time, of the increasing cost of education. It appears more reasonable to them that with fewer pupils and doubtful future quality of educational experience, the number of schools should decrease.

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* CODE clipping file.

** CODE clipping file (the board is not named).

Some boards have had to close up to 11 schools where enrolment has dropped by as many as 10,000 students. In selecting a target facility for closure, the following points are taken into account:

1. Ensure that a need for the school will not arise because of redevelopment, changes in pupil ratios, immigration patterns, or other factors (enrolment projections).
2. Location (core area; proximity to larger building).
3. Transportation (many of the bus routes are already organized; no great adjustment in travel arrangements will be necessary).
4. Substandard facilities (no capital for improvements).
5. Excessive operating costs (very old building for which expenditures in major repairs will escalate; heating and wiring might have to be replaced, etc.).
6. Staffing (transfer).
7. Resource allocations (distributed to receiving schools).
8. Future use (to be fully explored).

Receiving schools generally meet these criteria:[16]

1. Keep schools as close to students and the community as economically possible.
2. Ensure the safety of students travelling to school and within the buildings they occupy.
3. Minimize the distance of transportation required to place students in neighbourhood schools.
4. Place students in efficient and educationally functional buildings having a larger enrolment capacity.
5. Select schools with more adequate facilities* and less maintenance costs.

With regard to time required to prepare a community for the closing of a neighbourhood school, "the administrators interviewed for (one of the case studies) all agreed that a period of 3 years was necessary in most cases. This gives the community time to become involved in the decision and the procedures for closing the school, and allows parents to accustom themselves to the transfer of their children to other schools. Furthermore, in the three-year period many of the parents who might be opposed in the beginning may not have children in the school by the time the actual closing takes place, and those who are starting at the school during this time do so with the awareness that their time there is specifically limited. Providing this time, of course, requires effective long-range planning."[17] Although not all boards allow 3 years (some feel that a "minimum of 18 months" is sufficient), board administrators agree that the longer the time period, the more satisfactorily to all parties the closing process can be effected.

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[16] "Report and Recommendations - Organization of English and French Language Schools, 1977-1978" (The Ottawa R.C.S.S. Board).

* To provide for relocated pupils on a long-term basis.

Clear policy guidelines for closing schools are deemed necessary, especially where the disposition of a building is concerned.* (A board which has no definite policy in this regard can expect to find much hostility and organized opposition among parents and the community; they will be reluctant to accept the need for closing.) Such policies contain clauses on (1) advisory committee membership and purposes; (2) criteria for closure; (3) the process of closure; (4) conversion of space; and (5) two optional items -- transportation and furniture/equipment.

If transportation is not actually incorporated in a board's policy for closure, a separate study is usually carried out on the whole issue of transportation services. Sometimes an ad hoc committee on transportation is set up by the board to look at this question thoroughly. (Ideally, the relocation of students can be accomplished without creating a need for additional transportation.)

Transportation studies/surveys differ in scope and content. The Windsor Board of Education asked all elementary school principals to submit a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 (poor to excellent) for their schools. This survey reflected the principals' opinions regarding dangers presented to children in getting to and from school. Some boards regularly review certain problems relating to transportation:

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[17] Rideout, E. Brock, op. cit., p. 75.

* The York County Board of Education decided in May to sell a particular school building to the town of Newmarket for use as a library and cultural centre for $10, but it has since refused to confirm its decision and proceed with the sale. Trustees have had second thoughts about the deal. Some feel it would be wrong for the board to back down; others seem convinced the $10 sale will bring similar requests from other municipalities for about six additional surplus schools which will have to be disposed of soon. The mayor voiced his concern over the controversy. If the board forces the town to pay market value for the surplus building, future cooperation in acquisition of school sites between the town and the board could be seriously damaged. A major consideration, according to some trustees, is that the board intends to introduce a policy at its next meeting governing the sale of schools and sites.
(Toronto Star, York-Durham Ed., October 25 and 27, 1977.)

1. Safety. Ensure safe access to receiving school. Supervision/rules of conduct on the bus, and the location of pick-up and delivery points must be given special attention.
2. Travelling Time. All possible steps must be taken to avoid prolonged bus rides. (During winter months, pupils must wait for an early bus in cold weather, while it is still relatively dark.)
3. Luncheon Arrangements. Arrangements should be made to ensure pupils will eat in clean, pleasant, and well-supervised surroundings.
4. After-School Activities. Teachers must find alternate times to work with pupils who would like to participate in extracurricular activities, but cannot stay after school, and students who need extra assistance with their school work.

Given the necessity of a closing, the building is then either leased, sold, transferred to another panel, or temporarily mothballed (i.e. boarded up and used for storage until such time as it needs to be reopened) -- in order of priority. However, a vacant building often becomes a target for vandalism, necessitates costly maintenance, and causes parents to wonder why available property is sitting idle. Residents complain about litter and weeds on the site. For this reason, school boards are more interested in finding a suitable tenant for the building. An acceptable alternative use is defined as one that benefits the community without being a disruptive influence on the neighbouring homes. Often, the most welcome lessees in the eyes of the community are educational organizations which offer academic and recreational programs.

Community use of vacant or shared space (classrooms and buildings) is the topic for discussion in Chapter III.

CHAPTER III

COMMUNITY USE AND THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

A. COMMUNITY USE OF VACANT SCHOOL SPACE

As enrolments continue to decline, growing numbers of classrooms -- so far mostly in elementary schools -- are becoming surplus. Technically, as defined by the Ministry of Education, "surplus" refers to any classrooms not occupied by a teacher and a specified number of students. Operationally, local schools have two different types of vacant space:

1. Clearly surplus space which is unoccupied in any way.
2. Classrooms which are not being used for instructional purposes, but are occupied with board-managed services supporting the instructional program (e.g. lunch room, special art room).*

Schools with vacant classrooms face two main options: to use the space for their own enrichment programs (e.g. in the arts and, increasingly, in French); and to admit alternative daytime users -- "persons other than the students enrolled in the school and the staff of the school".[18] The latter option includes other board programs, such as adult day school and ESL classes; use by resource persons or central office personnel; and finally, community use. Initially, most schools turn to the former: taking advantage of the new space to spread out and offer activities for which they previously had no room. However, with the steadily increasing number of empty classrooms, schools are opening their doors more and more to outside users -- first school-related users, then the community.

The last category of alternative users, the community, is now rapidly growing. Neighbourhood residents are becoming more aware of the space opening up in the schools, and are seeing it as a public facility to be shared equally by parents, agencies and organizations such as legal aid clinics, health and psychiatric units/clinics, social service organizations (e.g. Family Service Association, Social Planning Council), and the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Research Foundation. Formerly the feeling was that money represented an obstacle to the extension and development of these agencies; now this view has changed. Today the real barrier is considered to be lack of collaboration with any existing community structure. This realization would appear to have a marked impact on alternate use of vacant space in Ontario's schools. Some of these agencies, for instance, are planning Parent Education and Parent Effectiveness Training programs to be introduced in the schools. They need space, leadership and contact with the community to enable them to carry out these much-needed (viz. child abuse; teenage drug and alcohol-related problems, etc.) programs effectively.

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* Portables are not considered vacant space in this context because of their general unsuitability for community use.

[18] Rideout, E. Brock et al., Educational, Social and Financial Implications to School Boards of Declining Enrolments (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1977), p. 181.

In addition, the Ontario Ministry of Education strongly endorses the community use of school facilities;* several boards of education have drawn up policies to promote and facilitate it.

This is the general picture across the province (as of 1976): daytime community use of schools is occurring mainly in cities and suburbs/boroughs. Most examples are found to be in elementary schools; to date very few high schools are involved in alternative use, since declining enrolment is just beginning to affect the secondary panel. Alternative use is prevalent in all types of communities; space is available in schools of all ages -- new and old.

The most common uses by the community are (1) day-care (pre-school and school-age) and nurseries; (2) adult day classes, ESL; and (3) pre-school programs for handicapped children (mentally-retarded, crippled or emotionally disturbed). Day-care programs are run by parent cooperatives, Home and School associations, etc.

Range of other uses, actual and suggested, encompasses:

- senior citizens services
- recreational programs
- art classes
- immigrant service

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* "Community extension development" is funded through Ministry Community School Development Grants.

- alternative school
- Red Cross
- Family Court
- volunteer services
- Block Parents
- Canada Works projects
- Income Tax clinic
- libraries
- municipal government
- service clubs
- Chamber Orchestra*
- community newspaper (Ward 7 News, Toronto)**

In the United States, vacant school space is recycled as "human services" centres, offering such services as health clinics; legal aid, a library; consumer education programs; a senior citizens' centre; manpower job counselling; Alcoholics Anonymous; counselling and tutorial programs for dropouts; a fitness and recreation program; adult basic education programs; drug counselling; as well as pre-school and day-care programs -- all under one roof![19]

Some problems in connection with community use have been reported. These include noise; traffic; mess (sloppiness); volume of calls to school office; groups needing wheelchair access (most available space is on the second or third floor); other groups that are difficult to place; private schools requesting space (potential conflict situation foreseen); and the question of fee-for-service. Most of these disadvantages have a simple solution.

Advantages outweigh disadvantages by far. They can be divided into three groups:

1. Point of view of principals
    - increases parent involvement
    - children exposed to different age groups and to children with handicaps

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* Use in exchange for free rehearsal attendance for children attending the school.

** Use in exchange for giving journalism classes.

[19] Surplus School Space: Options and Opportunities (New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1976), p. 17.

- places services right in the school
- day-care seen as boosting enrolment
- alternative use seen as helping to keep school open
- good for public relations
- serves needs of the community; reaches people normally outside the system by the provision of other forms of service in a school setting.

2. Point of view of school boards of Ontario

- good for community relations.

3. EFL Report (U.S. study)

- school reaches more people
- vandalism reduced
- provides human services
- financially good for agencies
- spreads the benefits of school resources.

In general: "... the use of vacant school facilities can be a new resource, often already paid for, in which a myriad of programs can take place. And these programs can help to hold in town the people who might otherwise choose to leave... In sum, the public problem of what to do with public facilities is more complex than the simple question: to close or not to close? Rather, there are options, some of which may strengthen the total community fabric and, in the end, convert the sense of shrinkage and decline to growth and resurgence."[20]

Implementation of alternative (community) use is subject to Ministry of Education regulations. If the ratio of enrolment to rated capacity is less than 60% in a school, other boards are entitled to request space ahead of the community. Ordinarily, school boards would lose a portion of their grant if space is leased for non-educational purposes. Ministry guidelines stipulate that the negative grant can be waived in certain cases.[21]

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[20] Surplus School Space (EFL), p. 23.

[21] Rideout, E.B., Educational, Social and Financial Implications, pp. 188-189.

Hours of use tend to be flexible. Boards usually permit daytime users to extend their hours into the evening -- with few exceptions. Normally users are not charged extra for evening use but some boards charge for caretaking if required during school vacations.[22]

Different boards have different ways of implementing community use. In one case, application is made to the planning department; in another, to the business office or to a consultative committee.

In general, agreements for community use take the form of a letter or lease, and there is usually some cost to the user involved. The trend is to make arrangements as simple as possible.

Over the past 4 years, the Toronto Board of Education, one of the pioneers in community use of schools in Ontario, has developed and implemented guidelines concerning "parallel use of vacant educational space". The basis of the initial research in 1973 was twofold: the growing view of education as a process extending beyond the classroom and for all people; and the trend toward declining enrolment. The first investigations of the situation were oriented toward day-care services (November, 1973). One year later a detailed Parallel Use Policy -- "The Parallel Use Committee: A Model of Shared Decision-Making" (November 21, 1974) -- was drawn up by the Community Planning Group, composed of trustees, board of education staff, representatives from the Ministry of Education and the City of Toronto, and community group members. A Parallel Use Coordinator was also hired by the committee.

Foremost among the reasons given for developing the policy were the following:

1. To preserve the city's network of neighbourhood schools.
2. To provide community organizations with low-cost, accessible space.
3. To provide for use of space in a way that would be beneficial to the school, the community, and the board.

A key policy point is the establishment of Parallel Use Committees (PUC's), local decision-making bodies consisting of representatives of school personnel, parents' and community service groups, local businesses and institutions. The function of the committee is to deal with the local situation of vacant school space (or determine if such actually exists) and with potential community users. Policy dictates that a PUC must be set up under the following conditions: where a school with enrolment of under 700 has 2 or more empty classrooms; and where a school with enrolment of over 700 has 4 or more empty classrooms. Parallel use applicants may then seek school space either through the Parallel Use Coordinator, or directly through the PUC in the location of their choice.

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[22] Ibid, p. 189.

Decisions on usable space and applications for it are made chiefly by the local committees by consensus. Priority is given to non-profit over profit-making groups, and to organizations whose purposes and activities will not conflict with the school program. Day-care is a top priority: it is seen as both an educational program and a way of increasing enrolment, since the day-care children are likely to feed into the school. There are presently 5 full-time and 4 half-time pre-school and nursery programs in operation; 8 school-age day-care programs (usually sharing space); and 28 supervised lunch programs.

Applicants who are granted use of vacant school space sign a permit which gives them exclusive rights to the allotted space between the hours 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. -- Monday through Friday. Should the school require the space again, the permit may be revoked in 60 days.

Financing of parallel use has proved the biggest problem so far. The original policy statement stipulates fees. However, over the duration of the policy, various inconsistencies regarding the payment of parallel use fees have developed. Some parallel users receive all or part of their space free while others pay the entire fee. In addition, numerous groups not formally designated as parallel users receive free use of space, even though the substance of their work is similar and sometimes identical to many paying groups. The fee-for-service at a per-square-foot rate per year (with various exemptions) has, therefore, provoked considerable opposition from users, and the situation has arrived at a point where inequities abound, rendering the Parallel Use Policy close to inoperable.

Officials now feel that the only way to resolve this problem is to reaffirm support for the original intent of the policy. That is, all groups using space on a regular basis during the school day should be assessed a fee-for-service. It is, therefore, recommended:

> That beginning January 1, 1978, all groups using space on a regular basis during the school day be governed by the Parallel Use Policy and pay fees according to the following scale:
>
> 1. Groups having exclusive use of space (i.e. more than 50% of the school day) will be assessed the full fee-for-service ($1.88 per square foot per year - 1978);
> 2. Groups using space on a part-time basis (i.e. up to 50% of the school day) will be assessed one-half of the fee-for-service rate ($.94 per square foot per year - 1978) provided that the space is available for school use the rest of the time.

A copy of the Application for Extended Use Permit and Permit Agreement (Toronto Board of Education) is appended at the end of Chapter III(A). (Appendix B)

* * *

Other community users (after hours) include:

1. Parks and Recreation programs for adults and children
2. After-Four
3. Meetings (e.g. Scouts, Guides, Home and School, various clubs and groups)
4. Adult crafts
5. Teen activities

After-hours use is enjoying as much popularity as parallel (daytime) use. Both are expanding at a considerable rate.

Two examples of community use of elementary school facilities are found at Ecole St. Joseph in Port Colborne and at the Duke of York Public School in Toronto, which have experienced severe enrolment decline.

At Ecole St. Joseph, one of three vacant classrooms is being used exclusively by the Golden Age Club: as a drop-in centre during the day; for social events in the evening. Club members have a key to the school, and come and go as they please; they are welcome and encouraged to drop in on classes any time. Thus, French-speaking seniors of the town are brought into the school, and actively involved in the school program on a regular basis. Duke of York no longer requires the third floor and part of the second for school purposes. The building now houses an Area Office; a school-community relations office; pre-school and school-age day-care centres (the latter in shared, not vacant, space); and breakfast/lunch programs.

With regard to community use of secondary school facilities, no real concern or crisis-stage is experienced yet among teachers in Ontario at this point. It is felt that because of larger school size, the decrease in secondary school enrolments will not hit classes quite as severely as it has at the elementary level -- at least for the time being. Increased flexibility -- in terms of time and responsibility -- is foreseen by teachers as an outcome of decline, and also more flexible internal use of space to provide a greater variety of (and better quality) programs. Considerable daytime use of vacant high school space for adult continuing education programs is anticipated. In the United States efforts to reach the turned-off student and to de-juvenilize the high school have resulted in a variety of community-based activities and programs; and the high school "after hours" has been a regular part of very many, if not most, communities.

The EFL* publication, The Secondary School: Reduction, Renewal and Real Estate, mentions a far-reaching integration of school and community by means of work-study programs using school and non-school space. Through strengthening its program of adult or community education and collaborating with community colleges and other community agencies, the traditional high school will eventually change its image to that of "college satellite" or "people's college". The push for career education -- including improved vocational programs for girls -- should certainly result in the strengthening and expansion of vocational education at the high school. Additional space is needed for special education students and programs. In addition to up-grading or retraining courses for adults and special programs for senior citizens, some high schools could offer locally based, in-service training for teachers, for which there is a growing demand as well. One way to meet the extra cost of keeping a high school in operation is to lease to for-profit commercial and business tenants, provided the zoning laws can be changed. In this way, the high school program would be enriched by the tenants who could take on high school work-study students as part of their rental costs.

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* Educational Facilities Laboratories in the U.S.

Community requests for use of vacant school space are on the increase -- in proportion to the rate of decline, or even exceeding it. A changing concept of education can be discerned: namely, the belief that education is an ongoing process; and that everyone, regardless of age or socio-economic stratum, can benefit from it.

APPENDIX B

PERMIT NO. ______

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE CITY OF TORONTO
Plant Operations Department 362-4931 (Locals
284,285,286) 155 College St., Toronto M5T 1P6

ALL INFORMATION requested must be given, or the application will be returned.

PLEASE PRINT PLAINLY

APPLICATION FOR EXTENDED USE PERMIT AND PERMIT AGREEMENT

For the use of Board property at ______________________________ School

by (Name of Organization) ____________________________________

Address ______________________________ Tel. No. Business ____________

Name(s) of person(s) authorized to enter into the permit agreement on behalf of the Organization.

____________________ (Name)	____________________ (Address)	__________ (Phone No.)
____________________ (Name)	____________________ (Address)	__________ (Phone No.)
____________________ (Name)	____________________ (Address)	__________ (Phone No.)

Purpose for which the premises are to be used: ____________________________

____

Proposed Use Complies with City of Toronto Zoning By-laws	Yes ____ No ____	Proposed Use Complies with City of Toronto Building By-laws	Yes ____ No ____
Proposed Use Complies with City of Toronto Health By-laws	Yes ____ No ____	Proposed Use Complies with City of Toronto Fire Regulations	Yes ____ No ____

If "NO" - estimate value of alterations $ ____________

Will you want a telephone - Yes _____ No _____

Period for which the permit is required: from the _____ day of ______________.

to the _____ day of ______________ exclusive of Saturday, Sundays and public

holidays between the hours of __________ to __________.

ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

(State here precisely the room or rooms to be used) ______________________

____

Date ____________________ Signed ______________________

Authorized contracting officer(s) ____________________ ____________________
(Person to be contacted also) (Name) (Office held)

____________________ (Address)

____________________ (Bus. No.)

____________________ (Res. No.)

Has applicant applied for parallel use at any other school. Yes ____ No ____

If yes, for what purpose(s) ______________________________

THIS PORTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE TORONTO BOARD OF EDUCATION

PERMIT FEE CALCULATION

ROOM NUMBERS	ROOM AREAS	TOTAL AREA
________	________	________
________	________	________
________	________	________

TOTAL AREA X $ PER SQ. FT. + INSURANCE PREMIUM = ANNUAL COST PER ANNUM

______ SQ. FT. X $1.61 + $40.00	$ ________
ALTERATION CHARGE (ESTIMATE)	$ ________
GROSS FIRST YEAR COSTS	$ ________

MONTHLY FEE

TOTAL AREA X $ PER SQ. FT.

$\frac{\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \text{ X } \$1.61}{12}$ = $ ________

RECOMMENDED FOR ACCEPTANCE

Parallel Use Committee ______________________ Date ________________

School Principal ______________________ Date ________________

Parallel Use Co-Ordinator ______________________ Date ________________

RECOMMENDED FOR SUBSIDY

Yes _____ No _____

Amount ____________

Date ____________

____
(Parallel Use Committee)

____
(Parallel Use Co-Ordinator)

B. THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

In concept, the community school is a step beyond the community use of school facilities. There is an underlying belief in a continuing school-community relationship which sees the school as an open place where people meet and work together: parents and residents are welcome to visit, volunteer, share their skills or knowledge. No set blueprint exists for the formation of the community school; openness of the concept requires openness in planning and operating -- "the real starting point is at the individual neighbourhood level".[23]

A survey of community school experience around the province reveals that such schools are opening up in many parts of Ontario; the result is changing attitudes and patterns of interaction. As Margaret Gayfer concisely puts it: "The school taking part in the community, and the community taking part in the school: this simple two-way equation furnishes the most accurate and the most relevant definition of the community-school relationship."[24]

Some community schools are built as such; some arise in older school buildings. Either way, people who have been instrumental in the process of developing a new community school agree on certain points: (1) it takes time -- start small and grow from there; (2) the support and cooperation of the principal is essential.

Several boards have already gained extensive experience in community school development. Public schools in London may apply to become community schools when local residents -- upon consulting with the principal -- submit a letter of request to the board. The Committee on Community Schools then meets with that community and the school principal to investigate the proposal. There are 9 community schools in London (as of 1976), each with a full- or part-time community leader who sometimes doubles as a part-time teacher at the school, and a largely volunteer-staffed program. One public school in Guelph has introduced a project funded through a Community School Development Grant (Ministry of Education). The board has hired a community worker to develop and foster community interests, and to promote contact, familiarity, and direct involvement with the school. The Leeds and Grenville Board has a full-time community school coordinator. His job is to help the communities develop themselves, "to put into operation the board's philosophy that the school and the community have a mutual bond of interest".[25] Other boards are now deploying "extension workers" (part-time teachers and part-time community leaders) on Ministry recommendation.

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[23] Education Minister Thomas Wells in his preface to Margaret Gayfer, Open Doors: A Community School Handbook (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1976), p. 3.

[24] Open Doors, p. 6.

Sample Board Document on Community Schools

Community Schools in Thunder Bay, 1977*

During the past three years, the Lakehead Board has focused its attention on alternative methods of school operation and utilization, and has laid the cornerstone for the future development of community schools within the board's jurisdiction. Since the term "community school" was frequently confused with that of "neighbourhood school", this report was produced in order to delineate the conceptual framework of, and an operational definition for, a community school, and to provide a more precise statement of intent and support to all schools and communities. Although it may not be appropriate (or possible) for every school and community group to proceed along the full continuum of community school involvement, it is anticipated that the present board policy will assist all parties in maintaining and developing mutually supportive programs and attitudes.

The report outlines criteria used in the identification of a community school, possible courses of action, community school funding, and recommendations. It defines a community school as "a school that is actively involved in the process of education within the context of its particular community".

Two support documents are attached for additional information:

(1) "An Abstract of the Reports of the Community Education Project."

This abstract and the reports upon which it is based were commissioned by the Government of Alberta Interdepartmental Community School Committee (Alberta Education, Advanced Education and Manpower, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife, and Culture) as a basis for possible policy formulation on the

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[25] Gayfer, M., op. cit., p. 35.

* The Lakehead Board of Education.

community school and community education concepts.
Project Director: W. Glyn Roberts, Department of Educational Administration, The University of Calgary, 1976.*

(2) "The Role of the Ontario School Principals with Specific References to Community-Related Activities: An Overview."

This is a summary of a study undertaken in 1976 under contract with the Ontario Ministry of Education. It focuses on the principal's attitudes and behaviours in relation to the school and the school's relationship with the surrounding community. Project Directors: Glenn Eastabrook (Faculty of Education, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario) and Michael Fullan (Department of Sociology in Education, The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto).

* * *

Sample Community Schools

1. Balmy Beach Community School, Toronto - Main Case Study

The Balmy Beach Community School is located in an economically mixed area; it serves a relatively stable and active community with many young families. Mobility tends to be more into than out of the "Beaches". All of the pupils live within walking distance of the school.

The new building** was completed in 1975 with a capacity of 470, anticipating future declining enrolment. Actual enrolment on opening was 540, K-7. In 1976 enrolment increased by 24 students with the addition of grade 8. Present enrolment is 535, JK-8, which represents a slight decline over previous years, but is still well over the intended capacity. Two portable units accommodate grade 7 and 8.

Balmy Beach was built intentionally to accommodate the community, which was involved from the start in the actual planning. The school was funded jointly by the board of education and the

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* The reports may be obtained through interlibrary loan. Contact: Dr. Brian Staples, Executive Secretary, Interdepartmental Community School Committee, Fourth Floor, Edwards Building, 11160 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5K 2H8.

** It replaces the old school, which was demolished.

City of Toronto Department of Parks and Recreation.* As a result, one room (the Community Room) belongs exclusively to the city, and two other rooms -- the art room and the double gymnasium -- are shared by the school (daytime use) and Parks and Recreation (evenings, weekends and during holidays). Because of the unique funding arrangement, special facilities became possible as well -- for example, the music/French room. A full-time coordinator from Parks and Recreation maintains an office in the school. Joint funding was also responsible for the establishment of an Advisory Council with representatives from many community groups and organizations; its function is the selection and organization of programs.

Balmy Beach operates programs for residents of all ages -- infants to senior citizens. They are open to people throughout the city (i.e. beyond the school attendance area), and are basically free of charge. Programs are characterized by a policy and feeling of openness and cooperation.

Programs are run days, evenings and weekends, thereby making as full use as possible of school space. Daytime non-school programs are mainly limited to the Community Room. For instance, a Community Library is in operation there one full day and two half-days per week for pre-schoolers, parents and any other interested adults. Volunteer parents share responsibility for library service preparation of craft activities, story-reading, and snacks. A supervised lunch program takes place daily between 11:55 and 1:15. A coordinator and two men hired by the Home and School Association, are in charge of supervision. An average of 80 children eat lunch at school, and participate in organized lunch-hour activities.

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* A similar arrangement on a larger scale has proved successful at the Ogden Community School in Thunder Bay. When the 70-year-old Ogden Public School was rebuilt in 1973, it became the Ogden Community School, jointly owned and operated by the board of education and the City of Thunder Bay. Physically, it is a three-level building: the first floor is a community centre, the third floor an open-plan school, and the second is a gymnasium and changing room, shared by the two. School and community centre share staff and resources and engage in joint activities. Programs operate during the day as well as evenings. Nearly 20 organizations use the centre. (Open Doors, pp. 43-48.)

Facilities used are:

12:00 - 12:30	- gym (eating and rainy-day activities)
12:30 - 1:15	- art room (noisy games)
	- library (quiet games)
	- schoolyard (active games)

The Balmy Beach lunch program has been so successful that it serves as a model to other schools. After-hours programs include:

1. After-Four, an enrichment program for school-age children offering a choice of 16 courses in 11 subject areas - Monday through Friday, from 3:45 to 5:00. Approximately 150 children are presently enrolled. Instructors are a mix of paid professionals and volunteers. Response has been very positive on both sides. A survey taken by After-Four instructors of teachers' responses also indicated general approval.

2. Department of Parks and Recreation, evening and weekend activities for adults (sports and crafts) and teens (Teen Activities and Teen Gym on Friday evenings). Instructors hired are, for the most part, local residents. All programs are popular and well attended. Total attendance for the first term is 1,900, or about 270 persons per week.

3. Kindergym, a gymnastics class for children aged 3 - 5.

4. A university credit course in Political Science offered by Woodsworth College of Continuing Education - University of Toronto. Attendance is nineteen. (Last year's Introduction to Criminology drew 29 students.)

5. Girl Guides and Brownies, who have been using the school (and the older one) as a meeting place for many years - and continue to do so.

6. Boy Scouts and Cubs; they have also been meeting at the school for a long time. Community volunteers are welcome to help out.

7. Balmy Beach Home and School Association, which carries out and organizes various activities at the school (e.g. Lunch Program, After-Four), and fosters awareness of educational issues

and programs, and of the school curriculum. The Association holds regular open meetings in the staff room once a month, and a series of program evenings, such as "Fitness in the Elementary School".

8. Summer activities operated by Parks and Recreation, in consultation with the advisory council. The summer program runs daily (seven days), and weekday evenings. It is available to children and teens only: Playschool every morning, Monday through Friday, for 3-7 year olds; Sports Clinic weekday afternoons for older children, as well as Fitness Testing and craft classes. Late afternoons are left open for various unstructured activities. Sports, games and crafts are offered evenings and weekends.

Programs are not hit-and-miss, but coherent within a philosophical as well as organizational framework. An awareness of the school as an integral part of the community and, indeed, as a focal point for it, is in evidence. Operating on a personal, day-to-day basis, the Home and School Association is an expression of this, while the advisory council plays a vital role in the functioning of the overall program. The latter is sensitive to the needs of both the community and the pupils.

Balmy Beach operates a number of other community-oriented programs and events which are basically integrated into the regular school programs:

- Senior VIP's. Senior citizens work as volunteer aides in the classrooms, assisting teachers in a variety of activities and programs. They meet with the principal on the first Wednesday of each month for luncheon discussion of their responsibilities.
- Tradesmen employed in various capacities of school maintenance by the Toronto Board of Education are invited into the school to teach and hold workshops about their respective trade, and to give children some practical experience. The following trades are represented: carpenter, electrician, metal worker, painter, tiler, bricklayer, plasterer, glazer, plumber, steamfitter and

roofer. It is interesting to note that all who come and work in the school are part of the educational team. (On the day of observation, a sheet metal worker instructed classes in the fundamentals of his trade.)

- Once a year local merchants are invited to the school. They meet in the staff room to get acquainted with each other, and then speak to the classes about what they do. This is one of the ways in which the school reaches out to the community, and, conversely, brings the community to the children.
- A special seminar for gifted children selected from Balmy Beach and neighbouring schools, called "Man Builds". (On the day of observation their session was with the sheet metal worker in the art room.)
- Piano lessons. A private teacher from the Canadian Bureau for the Advancement of Music teaches children (grades 2-8) in school space.
- Grade Eight Night. Representatives from the secondary schools meet with the grade 8 students and parents in January to discuss the programs and options available. There is an opportunity for individual questioning; the evening assists parents and students in making the important decision on their choice of secondary school placement.

* * *

Participating groups - school and community - keep a clear sense of priorities. Programs must not override or dilute the curriculum.

The approach taken by the one-year-old advisory council toward setting up the administration of a new school/community program was one of respect for the older, smaller one. They have been building on an already existing structure, even giving priority to existing users, rather than starting totally fresh. (This approach is recommended by the chairwoman of the advisory council.)

Clear lines of communication are essential and a key to the success of the Balmy Beach experience. Again, the advisory council is important in this respect. Another element is the Home and School Association and how it functions. The school itself becomes a community; its success depends much on the open lines of communication, the clear sense of role/responsibility and the positivity fostered by the principal and vice-principal at the Balmy Beach Community School.

2. The Kensington Community School, Toronto

The new Kensington Community School opened in 1972. It is an inner-city school located in a predominantly new-Canadian neighbourhood (Portuguese, Chinese, and Spanish-speaking immigrants).

A major principle at Kensington is one of openness to parents. Both the principal and his staff are highly visible in the community; the school's doors are always open.

Principal Lorne Brown submitted to CODE a summary of successful and less popular community activities. His letter is quoted in full:

> "Like many schools, Kensington Community School uses numerous ways to try to involve the parents in our school. The ones that work best seem to be 'social' involvements, and we have had very successful turnouts for such events as:
>
> (a) International Nights
>   - costumes, food, arts, from various countries
> (b) Potluck Suppers
> (c) Talent Nights
> (d) Our annual Carol Singing through the street of Kensington.
>
> Personal contact is very important, and our staff tries to visit the parents of the children prior to school opening in September. Personal contact between teacher and parent occurs at least three times a year.
>
> Bringing parents into the school as volunteers, or resource people, is also effective. Our long standing "Friday Afternoon in the Library" draws on talented neighbourhood people who perform for the children every Friday afternoon - story tellers, flute players, banjo pickers, whatever.
>
> Least successful are the 'professional' nights when we invite parents to discuss such serious topics as our school's reading program, nutrition, discipline, etc."

It is hoped that parents will, in time, overcome their awe of "The School". Clearly, Kensington's outward-looking orientation is helping to make parents feel welcome, and to keep the local community alive and healthy.

3. Ecole Felix-Ricard, New Sudbury[26]

Felix-Ricard was the first of the Sudbury District R.C.S.S. Board's French-language schools to develop into a community school. (There are now 14.) It was built in 1971 with the community school idea only gradually taking root in the minds of trustees and residents who feared loss of control and interference with the regular day program.

While the school was in the planning stage, the first principal, the parish priest and a few others had been debating the merits of using the school's facilities for the benefit of the community. They saw the new school filling a need which no other place did: to be a meeting place for all members of the French community.

The process was set in motion when the school opened, and the response from the people was positive. A community school committee was established comprising, among others, the principal, one trustee, some businessmen and several young people. It made formal application to the board for a community school.

A coordinator was hired a few months after the school opened. Nearly 600 people initially registered for the community program.

The full-scale evening program combines a mixture of academic, cultural, and social activities and courses. Father Hebert, the parish priest stresses that it is not a "night school". It is free, informal and planned with the involvement of the people who attend. Says the coordinator (who is also on the teaching staff): "Our school is more of a spirit, a friendly atmosphere, than a place to 'take a course'." His role is a critical one.

In Principal Comeau's words, "the community school has created a friendly atmosphere in the community; people feel that they belong somewhere and with others, and that the school can answer their needs. There's a changing attitude in the school itself - the feeling that we are a family."

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[26] Gayfer, M., op. cit., pp. 24-28.

To others considering setting up a community school, the Felix-Ricard "family" recommends first ascertaining that there is a true need for one, and ensuring that the community is involved in expressing its feelings. For itself, the school is seeking to find ways of integrating day and evening programs, and of reaching the poor. "These are the people a community school often forgets about -- the people who are so involved with welfare and social agencies that they don't want to be part of any institutional framework -- the people who feel inadequate, ill-educated and poorly dressed. Reaching out to them is important for their self-esteem. They have to know that they are wanted, and that they can learn in a relaxed, informal way about anything they wish."

Assessment

The foregoing case studies represent a small sample of community schools in Ontario. Each has developed a different structure, emphasis, and atmosphere; something unique because it has grown out of a particular setting and the needs and resources of particular people. If space and time permitted, we could present numerous other highly successful cases, each again individual. At the same time, there are quite definitely characteristics shared by all: those elements which give them the name "community school". They may or may not have surplus classroom space. If they do, it will undoubtedly be used. If they do not, special space will be provided -- classrooms are used in the evening, or space may be shared. As important as _physical_ space seems to be _mental_ space: a new, more open and congenial attitude about the relationship between school and community.

> "For me, the term community school conjures up a mental picture of a neighbourhood school serving as a catalyst towards developing a community identity, a neighbourhood sense of involvement and spirit - a place where men and women and children can get together for all kinds of educational, social, cultural and recreational activities -- a place where people can go freely, for whatever purpose, without feeling threatened or out of place."[27]

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[27] "The Community School Idea" (address by Education Minister Thomas Wells, Community Education Ontario '77 Conference, Niagara Falls, March 4, 1977).

C. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION ENDORSEMENTS

The Ontario Ministry of Education fully endorses the community use of school facilities and the community school idea. It particularly supports the following:[28]

1. Activities that lead to increased involvement of parents and others in the daily life of the school.
2. Activities that extend the school as a neighbourhood cultural, social, and learning centre for people of all ages, regardless of whether the school or some other body offers them.
3. Efforts by schools or school boards to take the first step in reaching out to other people-oriented agencies in the community, such as the recreation department, social services, the local Board of Health, the Children's Aid Society, etc., to establish ways in which they might effectively exchange information and coordinate their efforts and activities.
4. Efforts by schools and boards to improve communication with parents and others, which will lead to a better public understanding of the school's program.
5. Programs and projects that encourage schools to use community resources, both people and places, as part of the educational process.
6. Efforts by school boards to regularly review their policies affecting all of these areas, and to provide their staff appropriate support which will enable the further development of any aspects of the community school idea.

The community school concept embraces 5 specific "statements of objectives" which the Ministry encourages and recommends:[29]

1. Programs or projects that encourage individuals or groups to use their schools and school facilities.
    - daytime and after hours
    - a wide variety of people-oriented activities

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[28] "The Community School Idea".

[29] "The Community and Its School" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1977) (Pamphlet).

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2. Programs or projects that allow and encourage the school to use community resources
    - development of community-centred learning
3. Adult volunteers
    - can bring special talents and skills to the school program or an after-school activity
    - community involvement can often begin with the formation of a small adult volunteer program
4. The community-school advisory committee
    - useful link
    - usually composed of residents and educators and may also include representatives from local municipal or public service organizations
    - improves communication, tells the community what the school is doing and ensures that the school is aware of community views
    - might also undertake surveys to determine local priorities, interests, and needs in education
    - "The committee members' assistance in the development of educational, cultural, and recreational programs can trans form the school into a community learning centre, a skill exchange centre, where opportunities and activities are provided for young and old, for singles and entire families. The committee might also coordinate services provided through the community school and other local agencies. Finally, the committee can be a positive influence on the day-to-day curriculum and activities within the school."
5. Community school coordinator
    - employed by school board
    - can lend support and assistance to principals, teachers, the community-school committee, and citizens in general
    - can encourage community participation

In working toward the achievement of any or all of these objectives, one must bear in mind that the starting point for a good community school relationship lies in the hands of the principal and teachers of the school, and the parents and other citizens in the community. It is important to remember 3 things:

1. "Think small" at the beginning.
2. Have patience. Progress, in community school relationships, takes time.
3. The principal is the key, the "essential catalyst".

These steps have been taken by the Ministry to promote the community school idea at the local level:[30]

1. A Community School Section was created in the Ministry in late 1974, with a small staff at Queen's Park.
2. Community School Officers were designated in all 9 regional offices to act as resource persons at the grassroots level.
3. An 11-member Advisory Committee on Community Schools was set up to advise the Minister on how he could further promote the concept, and to monitor the effectiveness of present Ministry policies.
4. Special grants have been provided to school boards to finance specific projects designed to investigate or expand community school programs.
5. At every opportunity, the Ministry has stressed to educators, particularly school principals, the merits of having an open-door policy designed to make parents (and other community residents) feel more welcome in their school, whether in daytime or evening hours.
6. A fact sheet on community schools has been published, giving educators and citizens basic ideas on how to start community school activities.

In sum, further development of daytime and after-hours community facilities in all areas of the province has been officially and strongly endorsed by the Ministry of Education.

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[30] Gayfer, M., op. cit., p. 3.

D. CONCLUSION: COMMUNITY USE, COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, AND DECLINING ENROLMENT

As we have seen, supplies of vacant, usable space in schools are multiplying on one side, while on the other there is a growing trend toward, and promotion by school boards and the Ministry of community use of facilities and, ultimately, community education.

An increasingly broadening interpretation of the term "education" is seen for the future. Educational retraining/upgrading courses, and adult/career/basic education -- especially for immigrants to acculturate them (not necessarily ESL classes) -- will expand. These programs are considered in terms of producing more competent individuals, as well as better functioning human beings and citizens.

People will become far more open as a result of being brought closer to the school. They will realize more and more that the school belongs to everyone outside and within its walls alike; that it is a public community facility to be shared equally by all. Consequently, a greater variety of usages is foreseen. By the same token, the community becomes a school facility or resource.

Two ways of preparing for the future emerge: preparing for decline and preparing for (and effecting) change in the context of a shifting educational, social and economic climate.

Acknowledgements

Much of the information contained in this chapter was kindly provided by the following sources:

1. Telephone interview with Julie Mathien, Program Consultant, Community Use of Schools, Curriculum and Program Division, Toronto Board of Education -- and these documents made available to CODE by her:
    (a) "The Parallel Use Committee: A Model of Shared Decision-making." Toronto Board of Education: November 21, 1974.
    (b) Fact Sheet 19. Toronto Board of Education: December, 1975.
    (c) Report to the Chairman and Members of the Community Programs Committee concerning the Parallel Use Fee. Toronto Board of Education: Office of the Director of Education, June 24, 1977.
    (d) Report to the Chairman and Members of the Community Programs Committee concerning revision of the fee-for-service policy. Toronto Board of Education: Office of the Director of Education, October 5, 1977.
2. One full day's observation at the Balmy Beach Community School (November 9, 1977 -- 9:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.).
    (a) Conversations with the Principal, M.M. Darnley; Ross Best, Vice-Principal; the chairwoman of the Advisory Council; the Parks and Recreation coordinator and some instructors; the Lunch Program supervisor; a senior volunteer and teachers.
    (b) Printed brochures and information sheets.
3. Letter from Lorne Browne, Principal, Kensington Community School.
4. Conversation with Peter Noble, Education Officer -- Community Schools, Ministry of Education.
5. Conversation with Andre Rolavs, Planning Analyst, Budget Services Branch, Ministry of Education, and materials obtained through him and Shannon Hogan, Education Officer -- Curriculum Branch, Ministry of Education.

Carolyn Eisen assisted with the research, and prepared the outline for Chapter III.

CHAPTER IV

GUIDELINES AND SUGGESTIONS

As the preceding two chapters clearly show, some Ontario school boards have already responded to declining enrolment by compiling documents and instituting a variety of policies relative to school facilities, consolidation and community use of school space. However, these boards represent merely the "tip of the iceberg"; there are many others who are just now beginning to realize, on one hand, the immensity of the problem facing them, and on the other, the complexity of how to deal with it. Workable solutions cannot be found without a set of concrete guidelines outlining step-by-step procedures. We trust that the following suggestions will be found to be helpful and applicable in a variety of cases.

A. PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

1. There must be a long-range master plan; it should cover 10 years, and be based on the particular situation in each board.
2. Adequate planning and research in the early stages is most important. Long-term accommodation needs/surpluses must be determined. A system-wide survey/study of (1) substandard or inadequate facilities, (2) utilization of existing school facilities, and (3) surplus classrooms per school should be conducted at the outset.
3. Work in cooperation and hold discussions/workshops with neighbouring boards.
4. Develop policies that deal specifically with surplus facilities: consolidation of accommodation, or practices to be followed in closing schools (criteria for closure -- process of closure -- conversion/disposition of space -- transportation -- and furniture/equipment); determination of vacant space and the locking of classrooms; studies of alternative accommodation for students; pairing/twinning of schools; and alternative use of facilities (leasing of surplus space) -- with compatibility being the prime factor for consideration.

Policies must be easily understandable by the public to avoid needless confusion and irascibility. They must be flexible enough to accommodate an individual school community's special needs. Any useful and workable policy should include the following criteria:[31]

(a) Minimum effective class size beyond which the regular, day-to-day operation of a unit is no longer viable. This enables boards to identify critical areas which may require immediate attention.

(b) Advisory Committee and, especially in the case of larger school boards, a sub-committee or auxiliary (school) study committee to assist when an affected school requires further study. It is the purpose of the advisory committee to conduct a detailed study of the designated area and each school within it; consider alternative solutions, make recommendations to the board regarding the future of the area, and/or to facilitate implementation of the board's decision by acting as intermediary between administration and community. The committee may consist of representatives of trustees, board administrators, teachers, principals, parents*, members of the community-at-large and other groups, at the discretion of the board.

(c) An appeal mechanism might be built into the policy whereby board decisions with regard to a designated area or school may eventually be changed/modified as a result of input from the community.

5. Annual reviews of each school in the board are imperative. Watch for danger signals as outlined in Chapter II(C), p. 132. At least 18 months, preferably 2 or even 3 years, should be allowed before a final decision is reached by the board on the future of a school.

   Invite active community participation from the beginning -- as soon as the study gets off the ground; mention the possibility of closure in order to prepare neighbourhood residents for this final step. It is most important to know the community and identify its problems before the public meeting stage. The principal represents a significant source of information in this regard.

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[31] Rideout, E.B., Meeting Problems, pp. 84-85.

* This would include, preferably, those parents who are most opposed to the phasing out of a school.

School boards must be able to consolidate while maintaining public support and understanding. Three conditions have to be met:[32]

(a) Controlling community conflict through the use of citizens' committees, consultants, community surveys; and the involvement of the media. Present problem-solving access to the public.

(b) Preserving school credibility. Hold frequent public meetings both with small groups and with the community as a whole. Show modifications made to tentative solutions because of public hearings. Work closely with the media and keep them informed at all times. Inform parents and students by mailing out newsletters, invitations to public meetings, summaries of tentative solutions, and modifications considered. Encourage community input via questionnaire surveys and briefs solicited from community groups.

(c) Developing consensus. Select a basic closure criterion. Agreement is needed between (1) the administration and the trustees, (2) the school board and school staff, as well as among (3) school, community and board, and finally, (4) individual board members. Especially important is strong editorial support from the local media.

Assimilate the data prepared by board planners. These will include information on enrolment (past, current, and future), costs, staffing, accommodation/facilities, program, and other boards' policies or plans. Enrolment projections covering 5, if not 10 years must be accurate, and updated or adjusted every year. A breakdown by school and grade is advisable. Study demographic trends (general population statistics -- migration patterns and pre-school census). Larger boards might consider the implementation of a computerized data bank/information system.

Annual municipal assessment records, the regional offices of the Ministry of Education, the OISE Planning Department, representatives of the local planning board, and various other experts, can be very helpful. Data may be accompanied by a history of the "endangered" school building(s); maps showing attendance areas and neighbouring schools of units under review; and maps of future real estate development in a designated area.

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[32] Thomas, Donald, "Strategies for Closing a School, Reducing Staffs", NASSP Bulletin, 61, (March, 1977), n. 407, pp. 9-11.

Develop options (see Chapter II(C), pp. 133-134), which must all be fully explored in order to arrive at the best possible solution.

6. Any policy on the leasing of school space/buildings should cover these items:

   (a) Fee structure -- where applicable. This can be determined on a per-square-foot basis; or the annual maintenance cost may be charged. Educational and non-profit organizations are excluded.

   (b) Time period -- up to, but not exceeding 5 years. The lease may be renewed for a period of up to 5 years.

   (c) Cancellation clause -- applicable to either party.

   (d) Type of tenant -- must be compatible.

   (e) Other -- the lessee can be obligated to restore the property upon termination of the lease.

   Three general suggestions about leasing are: a board must determine that leasing is in the best interest of the community; inform residents of the nature of the tenant's activities; changed zoning (from residential to commercial) broadens the choice of tenants.

7. Identify an acceptable alternative use for a surplus school before the decision to close it is finalized; this presupposes that the building is structurally sound and worth holding.

8. If school closure is the only available alternative, principal(s), teachers, students, parents, and the community (as mentioned above) must be informed about the proposed changes immediately.

   First and foremost, there must be a clear policy on school closure; failing this, board/school/community relationships could be permanently strained. Such a policy should incorporate three clauses: (1) advisory committee membership and purposes, (2) criteria for closure, and (3) the process of closure.

   Pupil relocation requires advance planning. (Assurance must be given that children will not again be moved during their elementary years.) The standard of education in the receiving school has to be examined. Programs and facilities offered should preferably be superior to those in the target school selected for closure. Transportation studies are important: reasonable travel time and the safety of students must be assured, adequate supervision provided en route; supervised lunch programs may have to be arranged. "It is best to move the least number of children the shortest distance possible." (Chapter II(A), New York State case study.) Parents' concerns (e.g. overcrowding, loss of identity, future use of building and "tax dollars"), as well as emotional and psychological side effects on the children of such a change -- which is often thought to be a traumatic experience for them -- must be kept in mind. Closure may be facilitated if popular staff members transfer to the same school as the students. Every effort must be made to transfer pupils as one whole unit; try to avoid splitting the student population as this will generate community opposition.

The community will, at this stage, already be aware of the declining enrolment situation through their experiences with one or more options having been implemented at their school -- such as split grades, twinning/pairing, or locked classrooms. At the public meetings, it is essential that administrators and trustees stress the educational value and benefits (i.e. improved service) resulting from the consolidation. Do not over-emphasize cash savings; some parents relate savings to a reduction in taxes which is negligible and may be non-existent, while others might recognize that they are still paying "similar taxes for dissimilar service".

It is a good idea to attempt a gradual closing of a school -- one or two grades at a time.[33] Another method is extending the boundaries of adjacent school attendance areas until all students are absorbed; the school may also become an annex of a neighbouring unit for one year, then close.

Closing ceremonies in the target school, and "open house" or orientation programs held for the "new" pupils and their parents in the receiving unit greatly assist in smoothing the transition. Attempt to integrate Home and School and community organizations of the two attendance areas.

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[33] Rideout, E.B., Meeting Problems, pp. 89-90.

Should the decision to close involve a choice between several small schools and a larger one, it is, of course, more economical to close the former, since the cost of running two or three small schools -- irrespective of the pupil/teacher ratio -- is greater than the cost of operating a single larger unit.

9. One especially important item is the ability of the administration to implement quickly the decisions of the school board.

10. Ministry of Education regulations apply to the disposition of school property (Chapter II(C), p. 134). A thorough study should be undertaken before disposing of vacant sites in the event that an educational use might be found for them again in the future. The advisory committee may be wise to investigate ways which would let the community retain access to the building and/or grounds by exploring arrangements to this effect with potential lessors.

11. Mothballing a closed building should be considered only as a last resort because of (1) continuing operating/maintenance costs, (2) the threat of vandalism, and (3) parent resentment over seeing "their" school sitting vacant in a bed of weeds while their children are being bused to another school two miles away. It is recommended that where mothballing is the only choice, the building not be left completely vacant. Review the checklist for mothballing on pp. 93-96.

12. Before closing an elementary or secondary school, consideration might be given to these alternative measures:
    (1) Remove/sell portables
    (2) Repatriate grades 7 and 8 to their own local schools (eliminate senior public schools)
    (3) Close junior high schools.*

13. Establish priorities in phasing out schools. Be prepared to justify the decision to close a school relative to neighbouring schools which are not being closed.

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* The EFL Report, The Secondary School: Reduction, Renewal and Real Estate, refers to the "Accordion Concept". One way to plan for declining enrolment is "to consider the junior high school as a kind of expansion-contraction joint in the organizational structure of a school system or, to change the figure of speech, an accordion-like instrument to be extended or compressed as the numbers may require".

14. Finally, *the decision to close must be carefully deliberated*. Short-term savings may turn into long-term headaches. For instance, with rising fuel prices, transportation is becoming more expensive. Increased costs might also reflect maintenance of a closed facility, modifications to buildings to be leased, and cost associated with the retraining of staff.

15. School boards should instruct advisory committees to take a close look at the situation in their *collegiates and secondary schools* as soon as possible, and map out an appropriate plan for action -- in the manner specified above. (The focus of concern shifts from *vacant space* in the elementary schools to *subject option possibilities* at the secondary level which may necessitate a somewhat different approach.)

16. In cases where the school-age population shows rapid growth due to increased housing development in certain areas (i.e. new subdivisions), schools may have to be constructed. Boards are advised to give serious consideration to the funding arrangements set out in Chapter III (Balmy Beach and Ogden Community Schools), whereby the building is financed partly by the board, partly by the municipality (Parks and Recreation).

The solution that is adopted, whether it be school closure or some alternative plan, may be termed successful if the following conditions are met:

1. The community has accepted the solution as an improvement (educationally and socially), for the students and for the neighbourhood.
2. The solution is beneficial to the school board in terms of educational program and cost.
3. The solution is compatible with Ministry policy and the needs of other boards in the area.[34]

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[34] Rideout, E.B., *Meeting Problems*, p. 90.

B. ALTERNATIVE USES

(a) A parallel use policy is recommended in which terms, such as "surplus space" are clearly defined.

(b) Use buildings evenings, weekends and during the summer.

(c) Use surplus teachers for as many of the non-school programs as possible. (Special staff talents could be utilized to greater advantage.)

(d) Vacant school space used for alternate programs must be easily accessible and close to public transit in cities.

(e) Compatibility of use must be a major consideration.

(f) More emphasis should be placed on career skills and leisure activities for teenagers, adults and senior citizens.

(g) For-profit businesses and agencies should be encouraged to lease underused (secondary) school buildings. They could be approached with a view to participating in work-study programs; boards would also benefit financially.

(h) Suggested uses of vacant school space:

- nursery school and day-care; before and after-school care for school-age children (including lunch);
- post-secondary (continuing) education -- community college, university extension courses;
- special vocational programs for early school leavers; work-study programs;
- improved remedial work;
- facilities for the trainable retarded; for physically, mentally and emotionally handicapped children;
- upgrading/retraining programs;
- career counselling and guidance;
- adult basic education;
- courses to acculturate immigrants; ESL; immigrant services and counselling;
- in-service teacher training/retraining;

- senior citizen programs: drop-in centre, lunch, recreation, teachers' aides, crafts, etc.
- community and social services; legal aid: Family/Juvenile Court; counselling for dropouts; alcohol and drug-related counselling; parent education and Parent Effectiveness Training programs; and others;
- community library for adults and pre-schoolers;
- health services/clinics; dental clinics;
- outdoor education;
- teen activities;
- sports and recreation; arts and crafts;
- fund-raising events and volunteer services.

(i) Suggested uses of vacant school buildings:*

- community centre;
- youth recreation centre;
- multi-cultural centre;
- alternate form of school;
- community college or university annex;
- adult day school;
- special (junior) vocational annex;
- centre for the mentally or trainable retarded;
- alcoholic rehabilitation centre (sanatorium);
- conversion to apartments for senior citizens; singles; young families;
- conversion to museum or art gallery (particularly older schools with their high ceilings and windows);
- conversion to a diversified shopping centre housing many small boutiques and restaurants;
- education centre (board office, administration, etc.);

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* Some uses overlap with those listed under (h).

- federal and provincial government offices* (government agencies should consider foregoing expensive new construction);
- public library;
- music academy;
- "child care centre" -- bringing together (1) day-care integrated with child care and development programs, (2) early childhood education, and (3) training courses for child care workers. (Surplus teachers could be utilized here.)
- treatment centre for learning disabled children; there is a great and growing need for a facility of this kind. Disabilities such as dyslexia have thus far been ignored and cries for help have gone unheeded. As a result, frustration, bitterness and deep depression have led to several cases of attempted and "successful" teenage suicide. Sometimes the symptoms of this puzzling disorder have been diagnosed, but the local board is unable to help because it does not have enough trained personnel or the small pupil/teacher ratio needed for early and adequate treatment, even though the data suggesting some 12 to 15 per cent of all children are afflicted has been available for years.[35] It is, therefore, strongly recommended that 1 or more surplus school buildings in the province be used for this purpose.

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* This type of use should also be considered for shared space in partially vacant schools.

[35] Florence Jones, "Frustration Unto Death" in The Canadian, September 17, 1977.

Concluding Comments

Statistics and experiences speak for themselves; the facts are clear: enrolments in Ontario schools are -- or, in the very near future, will be -- down drastically, as the case studies in this report indicate. It is not our intention to present a ready-mix formula that promises instant relief, but to bring the issue into focus and to the attention of all school boards, so that they may act on it swiftly and effectively.

Now it is up to the individual "change managers" (board personnel) to utilize the material to their best advantage -- to extract from it what is appropriate in their particular case, and to adapt it to meet their special needs.

Although some of the boards are already well on their way to solving diverse problems of surplus facilities and school consolidation, it is hoped that they, too, will find the information valuable and useful for any future revisions to their policies or additional problems which might surface at a later date.

It is true that decline creates anxiety in the minds of those directly or indirectly affected. However, the consequences of decline do not necessarily have to be a negative factor. Rather, they can be positive in the sense that they might give rise to constructive change and useful opportunities. With fewer pupils, a variety of worthwhile, much-needed activities that require extra space can be introduced; closer interaction and a better, more rewarding relationship develop between school and community, both of which are thereby strengthened.

The Commission has supplied information on the recipe and ingredients used by others; the actual task of baking is a challenge faced by every board of education across the province.

C. RECOMMENDED REFERENCES

Andrews, Richard L., et al. The Environmental Impact of School Closures. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Institute of Education, Aug. 23, 1974. (ERIC document.) (45 pages)

Abstract: Officials representing 60 school districts contributed information to this assessment of the experiences of school districts that have closed elementary schools in the past few years. The data collected were examined and assessed according to 5 major topics: (1) criteria used for school closure decisions, (2) optimum elementary school size and methods of determining building capacity, (3) amount of cost savings resulting from closure of elementary schools, (4) disposition of buildings that had been closed, and (5) impact of elementary school closures on surrounding neighbourhoods. The three criteria cited most often as reasons for closing schools were declining enrolments, age of building, and desegregation efforts. Closure is a simple solution to the problem of excess space, but it is also a source of other problems, problems far more intricate and complex and much more difficult and costly to solve. Once an elementary school is closed, the environmental forces are set in motion. Numerous charts and a review of the literature on optimum school size are included.

Corman, Linda. Community Education in Canada: An Annotated Bibliography. OISE Bibliography Series No. 2. Toronto: OISE, 1975. (53 pages)

Abstract: This is a bibliography in four parts of Canadian writings and videotapes on "community education in Canada". Chapter 1, "Community Schools/Community Education", lists items which relate to theories and definitions; specific community schools in Canada; generalized approaches to developing community schools; particular projects; and the report of the Select Committee on the Utilization of Educational Facilities (Ontario). Items include discussion of both community use and community control of schools. Chapter 2 confines itself to a list of works on community use: arguments, problems and procedures, and surveys. Chapter 3 treats community control of schools -- the pros and cons, and strategies. The last chapter lists other bibliographies, including works which contain U.S. references.

Eismann, Donald, et al. Schools and Neighborhoods Research Study: Phase One -- Executive Summary. Seattle Public Schools, Washington, December, 1976. (ERIC document) (44 pages)

Abstract: This report is a summary of the research conducted in Phase I of the Schools and Neighborhoods Research Study. The program's objectives, each of which represents a separate study, are to identify the perceptions and expectations of neighbourhood residents and businesses with respect to the school, to identify the services provided by the neighbourhood school, and to determine the significance of the neighbourhood school to the maintenance and the development of the neighbourhood unit. The research approach used a pre- and post-closure comparison of selected variables. Five general questions provide the framework for reporting the findings. -- (1) Is the "quality" of a neighbourhood changed by school closure? (2) Are residents less satisfied with their neighbourhood and schools after school closure? (3) Does school closure affect the quality of education available to students in the closure neighbourhood? (4) Does school closure affect school levy support? (5) Does school closure change the pattern and frequency of community use of schools? Appendices give the background and closure circumstances, and information about the research methods and school closures in other cities.

Gayfer, Margaret. Open Doors: A Community School Handbook. The Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1976. (92 pages)

Abstract: "This booklet contains ideas, suggestions, definitions, warnings, and advice -- all coming from educators and citizens who are at various stages along the community school continuum. It is not a survey; the purpose is to give an idea, through real-life experiences and thoughtful interpretation, of the activities, approaches, and dynamics that characterize the community school in Ontario." Introduction by Education Minister Thomas Wells; names and addresses of Community Schools Officers (Ministry) are given at the end.

Jackson, R.W.B. *Canada 1977 - A Demographic Mirage?* or *The Myth of the "Echo of the Baby Boom"*. Informal Publications Series. Halifax, Nova Scotia: The Atlantic Institute of Education, No. 21, 1977. (10 pages)

Abstract: It has been predicted by Statistics Canada that the 1980's will see the offspring of the baby boom children -- girls born between 1946 and 1960. The author argues that the "echo of the baby boom" is *not* sounding now, nor is it going to sound. The reproductive period is growing shorter, and women are having fewer children. At this point in time, the baby boom girls have almost completed their child-bearing, and the smaller group born after 1960 are entering. For a variety of social and economic reasons, it seems likely that fertility levels will remain low. "The 'echo' has faded out before it started." Tables and graphs illustrate the situation around the country.

Keller, William, et al. *Enrollment Trends: Programs for the Future. A Planning Guide for Districts with Declining Enrollments*. Albany, N.Y.: New York State Education Department, Office of Research, Planning and Evaluation, August 26, 1976. (ERIC document) (106 pages)

Abstract: This document is designed to offer guidance to those school district officials in New York State who are faced with making decisions about how their districts will cope with declining enrolment. Enrolment in New York schools is no longer growing at a predictable rate as it did for so many years. School districts need to establish a different perspective on enrolment decline in order to formulate adequate and creative means of coping with this phenomenon. The district must first collect demographic information to define the decline problem. Current and future needs must be analysed, future facility needs outlined, and the fiscal requirements of future programs, staff, and facilities must be determined. This volume's appendices contain data on enrolment decline and building requirements for the State of New York. Chapters discuss analysing programs, facilities, and educational finance, as well as determining study strategy for enrolment decline. Declining enrolments are a complex problem, and it is not likely that districts can adequately cope with it if they deal with it in a fragmented manner.

Ontario Legislative Assembly. *Select Committee on the Utilization of Educational Facilities. Final Report*. Charles E. McIlveen, Chairman. Toronto, 1975.

Abstract: The final report entitled "What Happens Next Is Up To You", combines ideas and recommendations of the three interim reports with discussion of feedback received on the earlier work. Topics covered are: "Schools as Community Facilities", "Community Schools", "Community Use of Schools", "Year-Round Educational Programs", and "Open Education in Ontario". Forty-three final recommendations include two directly relating to surplus school space: nos. 14 and 15 recommend community involvement prior to decisions on space utilization, school closure, and sale or other disposition of school property. Other recommendations are concerned with the adoption of a system of community education; planning and design of community facilities; accessibility for the physically handicapped; payment for community use of schools; planning and organization of the school year; year-round educational programs; and the establishment of a council on open education. There is strong emphasis on active public participation/involvement in such specified areas as planning, curriculum development, and community education programs.

Rideout, E. Brock, Principal Investigator, et al. *Educational, Social and Financial Implications to School Boards of Declining Enrolments*. Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1977. (212 pages)

Abstract: This volume contains findings around four topics. Chapter 1 is concerned with declining enrolment in secondary schools: the strengths and weaknesses of small secondary schools, and hints for operating them effectively. Chapter 2 gives results of a professional-opinion survey on the minimum acceptable size of elementary schools and concludes with supplementary tables and the questionnaire used. Chapter 3 examines the relationships between elementary school size and cost per pupil. The (board/principal) letters and questionnaires are reprinted in an appendix to this chapter. Finally, Chapter 4 investigates alternative daytime use of vacant school space -- "the space made available by declining enrolment when it becomes too much for further efficient school use". Twelve case studies and a bibliography follow the general findings of this research project. Supplementary bibliography, pp. 211-212.

Rideout, E. Brock, Principal Investigator, et al. Meeting Problems of Declining Enrolment: Educational, Social and Financial Implications to School Boards of Declining Enrolment. Ministry of Education, Ontario, 1975. (104 pages)

Abstract: This volume contains the findings of the initial investigations of E. Brock Rideout and his research team. Its subject is school closure. Nine cases in 6 jurisdictions were studied; the results are reported in Chapter 2 of the publication. It was felt that such case studies would "... enable the Ministry to draw some inferences, particularly concerning the interplay of educational, social, and financial factors in controversies over the proposed closure of schools". Chapter 3 contains suggested guidelines based on the case studies, and intended for the use of boards which are apparently faced with the need to close schools. It attempts to combine the findings with information collected from board policies and from other studies on declining enrolment. Chapter 4 comprises a review of selected references related to enrolment decline; a selected bibliography appears at the end of the report.

Small Schools Task Force. Final Report. Eugene Public Schools, Oregon, February 16, 1976. (ERIC document) (83 pages)

Available from: Office of Media Services, School District 4J, 200 North Monroe, Eugene, Oregon 97402.

Abstract: In the spring of 1975 the Eugene (Oregon) school board appointed a task force to make a comprehensive study related to all aspects of possible closure of small schools. Consideration was given to population and enrolment trends; economics; building condition; school size; school design; neighbourhood and community implications; program capacity; staffing; alternatives in personnel, support programs, and facilities; and criteria for evaluation of low enrolment schools. Among the group's recommendations were that no elementary school be closed at the time; that the school board set a standard for the amount of non-classroom space necessary for effective operation of an elementary school; that alternative use of extra space in any of the 31 elementary schools be actively sought; that whenever enrolment at any school drops below 75% of program capacity, a committee determine the best use of all parts of that school; that alternative use for buildings be found before any schools are closed; that small neighbourhood schools accessible on foot be maintained even at some additional costs, and that when new schools are constructed, buildings be designed for an enrolment of 200 to 350 students.

Surplus School Space: Options and Opportunities. New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1976. (72 pages)

Abstract: This report addresses itself to the complex public problem of what to do with public facilities, rather than to the single question: to close or not to close. It serves as a guide to understanding the condition of declining enrolments, the procedures which could be followed in coping reasonably with it, and the options that might be used as alternatives to the mothballing or abandonment of schools. Reference is made to the way in which districts have averted closed schools by widening educational and social services, increasing career and special education programs. Planning must be done on a district-wide basis, as the declining enrolment trend is general; it must take into account local population trends, zoning and potential land development, the area's private schools, costs, local educational needs, legal constraints and government aid, and the school's role in the community. Numerous positive advantages emanate from the mixing of school and community.

The North York Board of Education. Report of Facilities. November, 1974.

Abstract: Part A of this thoroughly executed report, Future School Requirements, includes sections on (1) population and enrolment trends; (2) school accommodation requirements, (3) improved instructional facilities, (4) utilization of vacant classroom accommodation, and (5) undeveloped school sites. Part B discusses Instructional Support Services and Business Space Requirements under the following headings: (1) history, (2) existing locations, (3) future requirements, and (4) consolidation. Part C contains Financial Considerations. Included in the list of attachments are (1) comparison of overhead costs per pupil for various size categories of elementary schools, (2) average school size by year, (3) possible candidates for closure, (4) schools planned or under construction, (5) schools deficient in area allotment, (6) available vacant classroom accommodation, (7) requests for use of vacant space, (8) possible appropriate functions for sharing, (9) location of vacant school sites, and (10) major support facilities.

The Secondary School: Reduction, Renewal and Real Estate. New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1976. (64 pages)

Abstract: It is none too early for school boards to plan for alternate use of surplus high school space. The coming period of declining enrolment in secondary schools could be the time for a major overhaul of secondary (and adult) education. Community use similar to that in elementary schools is one suggestion; a second possibility is a far-reaching integration of school and community at another level by means of work-study programs, including programs for adults. One idea for financing the new type of school is leasing to profit-making tenants who would be involved in the educational program. EFL hopes this report can help communities begin to plan now, to consider the local conditions, and to choose options that will enhance and invigorate the high school.

The Toronto Board of Education. *The Parallel Use Committee: A Model of Shared Decision-Making.* Toronto, 1974.

Abstract: In general, the report of the Community Planning Group regarding daytime use of vacant school space by non-school groups outlines the principles and priorities of community use, and procedures for its implementation. Specifically it defines the meaning of vacant space, and details the proposed Parallel Use Committees -- when, where, and how they are to function for the purpose of matching vacant space with potential users -- taking into consideration both community and school needs. Drafts of permits and agreements to be used are attached.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following abstracts are reprinted from the ERIC document, and were written by the author: Andrews, Eismann, Keller, and the Oregon Final Report. The quotation given in the Gayfer abstract is by the author, and appears on p. 5 of *Open Doors*.

We have quoted the abstract of the North York Board's "Report of Facilities" from E.B. Rideout, et al., *Meeting Problems*, p. 100, in full. Unfortunately, submissions from this board did not reach the CODE office in time to be included in the body of the present study.